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15 CENTS

CURRENT COMMENT, 289

TOPICS OF THE DAY

Is Disarmament Possible? 292
What Labour Might Do, 293
The College Community, 293
The Quality of Life, 294

Peasants and Pioneers, by Geroid
Tanquary Robinson, 295
Chekhov's Notebook, 296
The Open Shop and After, by
Ordway Tead, 297
Recollections of Chekhov: III-V,
by Maxim Gorky, 298
The Failure of Modern Criticism,
by Ralph Block, 300
A West-Coast Elysium, by Ed-
ward Townsend Booth, 301
Without Benefit of Clergy: IV,
The Woman in the Baptist's
Case, by Alexander Harvey, 302

LETTERS FROM ABROAD

A British Hall of Fame, by
Charles Thomas Hallinan, 304

MISCELLANY, 305

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

"Fellowship is Life," by I.
Goodman, 306; The Londoner
and His Posters, by H. T. C.,
306; The Outlook in Ger-
many, by A. B. C., 307

BOOKS

The Bohemia of the Heart, by
Cuthbert Wright, 308
A Disease and its Symptoms, by
Charles Harris Whitaker, 309
Shorter Notices, 310
A Reviewer's Notebook, 310

CURRENT COMMENT.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE made an interesting remark last week, and while it was quite the expedient thing to say, we think it was coincidentally true. He observed that whereas immense pressure is usually brought to bear upon a Government to settle major industrial disputes, in the present deadlock between the coal-miners and the coal-owners of Britain, his Government had been subjected to hardly any pressure from any quarter. He said that everybody seemed apathetic and lackadaisical, not caring, apparently, whether the strike which has now run for two months, is ever settled. The miners are not nagging him, nor yet the owners. The big industrialists survey with astonished calmness the prospect of an indefinite shut-down; smaller manufacturers cheerfully say that they can stand it if the rest can; and merchants report so much dead stock on hand that they are glad to be freed from consideration of further buying.

At first sight this state of things appears extraordinary and unnatural, but a longer look shows it to be, after all, about what one might expect. British industry and enterprise have been so taxed, restricted, burdened and harassed in every conceivable way by the pernicious activity of the Government, that the ginger has been taken out of it. Surely it is no matter for wonderment if the British industrialist, the legitimate manufacturer and trader, has come to see that he is working chiefly for the Government and its beneficiaries, and that it does not pay. Putting oneself in his place, it is easy to understand the philosophic turn of mind which puts up the shutters and says, "My income is one-fourth or one-twentieth of what it was ten years ago, and the wear and tear on my nerves is four to twenty times as great. I think I shall pocket my losses and play golf for the rest of my days."

In this connexion it may be remarked that unless the United States Government restrains its voracity, the American industrialist and merchant may come to the same frame of mind before long. Better a dinner of herbs and contentment therewith, says the Wise Man, than—than something or other, we do not remember just what. No matter—it is, anyway. Income-taxes, excess-profits taxes, taxes on every imaginable operation of industry and enterprise—the monumental total of the Gov-

ernment's exactions is discouraging to the humble ambition to buy and sell and get gain. Why should one work like a slave all one's days to provide spending-money for the United States Congress and the State legislatures, especially when ninety-two per cent of the Federal revenue goes for war-purposes, and the State revenue goes so largely for bits of fantastic jobbery like the Lusk report?

It seems to us that the official barkers and ballyhoo-men of our public life ought to undertake at least a dress-rehearsal in order to present a decent ensemble when they come to the point of talking about the part that this country played in the war, and especially when they try to show the motive which the United States Government had in entering the war. The score is very difficult and involved in these places; it is an intricate fugue movement, and our grotesque performers ought to practise it in private and not venture on so much sight-reading in public. Mr. Harvey, at the extreme east end of the pit, conceives of the theme as a solo-fantasia for the bass-drum, and says that we went into the war solely for the United States of America, that we were afraid not to fight. Bishop Manning, evidently trying to keep one eye on the conductor and one eye on the score and one eye on the British Foreign Office, says that we did not go into the war merely for our own protection or for any low and selfish interests; it was a war to put down war; it was a war for truth, right, justice and humanity. President Harding, again, says that we unsheathed the sword in behalf of suffering humanity and were brought into a supreme and sublime effort to save the civilization of the world. We hope that these raucous discords may be accomodated into harmony in future performances. None of these gentlemen will ever let slip the reason why we did go to war; that is certain: and as long as their aim is to lull us with fiction, they ought to make their fictions sound plausible and musical and harmonious and less like a riot in a boiler-factor.

Does anyone know the terms of the Franco-Polish alliance; the Franco-Belgian alliance; the Franco-Turkish treaty; the Italo-Turkish treaty; the Anglo-Greek understanding; the Anglo-Russian trade-agreement; the treaties outstanding among Italy, Poland and certain of the Danube States? Have texts of any of these agreements been published in full? Have any of these treaties, except one, been submitted to the League of Nations as by the League's covenant made and provided? Not as far as this paper is aware. We recall with some chagrin that the war was to be the death of secret diplomacy, among all the other evils that it was guaranteed to destroy. We wonder whether those who are still chipping in right manfully to pay the costs of that same war, and have perhaps lost a son or a brother in the conflict, do not sometimes feel that they ought to get a little something for their investment of grief, confidence and money. We have heard a great deal about the deservings of those who have sacrificed so much "over there," and we would not for the world lose sight of them, but we can not help thinking, sometimes, about those who did, and still do, the heavy sacrificing over here.

It is they who may properly face with some resentment the fact that since the war we have had merely a continuance of the same old thing done in the same old way

by the same old gang. Let us put the matter hypothetically. Suppose the war was not to make the world safe for democracy, to establish the rights of small nations, to repress an infamous and gigantic conspiracy against the peace of the world, to overthrow secret diplomacy, to loose the bands of wickedness and to let the oppressed go free. Suppose it was a war fought expressly to intrench privilege, to enrich profiteers, to settle a commercial rivalry; suppose that it was conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, without a single honourable motive, and aimed at nothing but the lowest, meanest and most sordid ends of economic exploitation. Very well: now, in what respect of conduct or consequence would the war, on that hypothesis, have differed from the war as it actually took place? Is there one line, one single petty detail, of contemporary history that would have to be rewritten if the war had been that kind of a war instead of that kind that it was proclaimed to be?

GOVERNMENT-MONOPOLIES are interesting and repay study. In some lands, the Government claims a monopoly of salt, tobacco, quinine, matches, spirits, and other commodities. In all lands, the Government claims a monopoly of murder, arson, robbery, blackmail and mayhem, and is singularly jealous of its prerogative. Our own Government has just added a curious sort of variant to the list, in the form of a monopoly of character-defamation. We refer to the publication of the slacker-list. According to the press, the Government did not publish until it had set itself above the law by getting an opinion from the Attorney-General that error in the process was not actionable. It seems a rather cowardly business, characteristically so, indeed, and one does not envy those who have the administration of such a dirty task. Still, as wars go and Governments go, it is relatively a small matter, no doubt, and should not be dwelt upon in the face of the grosser forms of iniquity that nations habitually suffer at the hands of politicians and militarists. Its picayunish, petty disreputableness is, however, perhaps worthy of remark, and on that account we take leave to mention it.

BUT now that the slacker-list is out of the way, or nearly so, will the Government, operating under the same general license and immunity, proceed to publish the profiteer-list? There might be a little trouble about compiling it, and some injustice might be done to individuals here and there, but what of it? If it is a good thing that the public conscience should be impressed by publication of the slacker-list, even at the expense of a few defamed characters, it would be as good, or even better, to pillory the profiteers at corresponding risk. Some time ago Mr. Amos Pinchot compiled a list of about thirty of the most prominent among our dollar-a-year men, members of the Council of National Defence, showing their connexions as directors and shareholders in various corporations, and tabulating the war-profits of those corporations. We can not answer for Mr. Pinchot, but if the Government should wish to take this list as a starter, we make no doubt that as a good and loyal citizen, he would gladly comply with a request to turn it over for that purpose. For our part, we would freely and fully forgive the Government for its little eccentricity in regard to the slacker-list if it would publish Mr. Pinchot's list alone, without troubling to add another name.

It is not often that one gets in handy form an actuarial estimate of a political policy. The New York *World* has insured the life of one of its staff-correspondents who has gone to Ireland, and the rate of premium paid now is eight times as much as the rate paid four months ago. The *World* calls attention to this fact as an index of the progress made by Sir Hamar Greenwood "towards the restoration of law and order in Ireland, and of the confidence felt by the insurance-company's underwriters in the reliability of his continued assurances of the successful results of his policy." Money talks.

OUR Government, it appears, has just given the Mexican situation another little push toward the pit. Recognition is offered, but the price is more than Mexico can pay without putting her sovereignty in pawn. The terms, as officially announced, are substantially those fixed in the report of Senator Fall's committee on Mexico; that is to say, American holdings acquired before the adoption of the new Constitution must be specifically excepted from the operation of Article 27, relating to the nationalization of sub-soil rights; further than this, Americans must no longer be considered as Mexicans in respect to the ownership of lands, as the Constitution provides, but must have the right of diplomatic appeal in controversies that involve property and privilege. If the first requirement were complied with, all previous attempts at the nationalization of natural-resource monopolies would be nullified, in so far as these attempts affect American grants. With the field thus cleared of old obstacles to exploitation, the second provision would make the Government of the United States the protector of American-owned monopolies against nationalization at any time in the future.

IF Señor Obregon consents to make the Government of the United States a partner in the control of Mexico, it is very likely that he will shortly be in need of support more substantial than that implicit in the simple act of recognition. The Mexicans are good at making revolutions, and a President who gives aid and comfort to the United States is not likely to stay long in Chepultapec. That is to say, no Mexican Government can meet Mr. Fall's conditions and continue in power without American military support. This is perhaps a pretty strong statement, but we are willing to make it, speculatively, for the sake of the solid truth that lies behind it. If there is danger in giving in to the *gringo*, there is danger, likewise, in holding out against him. In the latter case, as in the former, some of the Mexicans will be at outs with their Government. The malcontents of the second variety are not in the least anxious to have the American monopolists regarded as Mexicans, and treated accordingly; they wish to reverse the situation, and to preserve the system of privilege, not only for the Americans, but for themselves. In order to gain their object, this group would certainly accept the terms proposed by Washington; but without American military aid, they could hardly hope to control the country. In all probability, then, the American Government can not bring about either a partial or a complete legalization of the monopoly-system without the use of force. For the present, therefore, it contents itself with a diplomatic attack which keeps Mexico in a state of disturbance, and enables the oil-men to exploit the country illegally, but very profitably nevertheless.

It does one good to hear straight, honest talk like that of the Employer's Association of Pittsburgh, wherewith it knocked the bottom out of a local campaign by the Young Women's Christian Association for a building-fund of \$200,000. The Y. W. C. A., in its innocence, seems to have endorsed a pretty mild industrial programme consisting of a hotchpotch of trade-unionist, liberal and socialist nostrums which amount to nothing and arrive nowhere, and could not be regarded seriously by anyone who was not either scandalously ignorant, or terribly frightened, or both. The Employer's Association, however, acting on the laudable principle *obsta principiis*, passed the word around, and in consequence the Y. W. C. A. could raise only about half of the needed sum. What struck us as especially good was the following: "The dangerous attitude of some of our religious and quasi-religious institutions is one of the most serious things we have to face at the present time. Unless those of our members who are connected with the various churches of the country protest in vigorous fashion against the radicalism which is creeping into our church bodies, the result will be extremely grave. Religious bodies can hardly expect us to give them money for the purpose of manufacturing weapons with which to destroy industry."

HEAR! hear! This is what we have always believed, and we are delighted to give publicity to the Employer's Association of Pittsburgh for having put it squarely, without any clumsy unction or sanctimonious flapdoodle. How much better this is than the intimation put out by the Lusk report, that if the clergy were better paid, they would tend to become more conservative; an intimation, by the way, which brought out an uncommonly able and powerful reply from the Rev. Dr. Coffin, wherein he first told the Luskites what he thought of them and why he thought it, and then proceeded to skin them alive, as they richly deserve. But, returning to the Employer's Association of Pittsburgh, we trust that its admonition will be devoutly heeded by all concerned. Organized Christianity, ever since the time of Constantine, has taken so much of this kind of money and paid this kind of price for it, that it has dragged religion down to share in its own bitter popular disrepute. As sincere friends of religion and of industry, we lament this; and we do not see how matters can be mended until the churches, either voluntarily or in such ways as the Employer's Association suggests—preferably the latter—have their supplies shut off. "Thy money perish with thee!" said the Apostle to an enterprising brother who seems to have had the Association's keen eye for a good thing, "because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Not a bad policy, on the whole, and one that seemed to work pretty well in the old days. Times have changed, of course, but we somehow have the perverse notion that it would work yet.

THE Postmaster-General has restored the second-class mailing-privilege to our contemporary, the *Liberator*, and has indicated a general reversal of the policy of Mr. Burleson; hence the chances appear good that the New York *Call* and the Milwaukee *Leader* may also have this privilege restored. It is a pleasure to record this action on the part of Mr. Hays, though if he is a right-minded man he will want no praise or thanks for it, as he has done only his simple duty. If it were possible to pick out one feature of Mr. Wilson's Administration that is more discreditable than another, it would probably be its subversion of constitutional rights as exemplified in the treatment accorded these organs of opinion. We doubt whether a Republican Administration would have done differently or done better under the same conditions. When the expression of opinion counts in something more than an academic sense, government may be depended upon to suppress it as far as it can. We would be glad to believe that a Republican Postmaster-General in Mr. Burleson's place, would have behaved differently; but we do not believe it.

IN these times, it is not without peril that a man accepts the guidance of his own conscience. The honest enthusiast who preaches against the current theories of property and privilege is often regarded as a more dangerous character than the dishonest man who makes a practice of lifting large quantities of his neighbour's goods. Our judges are not noted for leniency in their dealings with the communists, but every once in a while a number of the judiciary overstrains the quality of mercy for the benefit of some person whose offence against property is not a matter of theory, but of practice only. Certain grafting masons of New York City have recently benefited by this disposition to leniency, for Justice Davis of the Supreme Court has chosen to release them with moderate fines, instead of sending them to jail. An examination of the evidence had convinced the judge that the culprits were men of good character, and apparently His Honour could not bear the notion of sending such respectable people to jail. This bears out a notion of ours that punishment, which in theory has something to do with penitence and purification, is in fact a disgrace; while crime itself if committed with due propriety, need work no serious injury to an honest reputation.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY has done itself exceeding proud in requiring acquaintance with the English Bible and the plays of Shakespeare from all candidates for its bachelor's degree in the liberal arts. The Cambridge authorities lay down the dictum that these are "two works of literature without which an adequate appreciation of English letters is impossible"; and we think that their position is indisputable. They say that the King James Version is "one of the great monuments of English prose, but any standard version, ancient or modern, may be used." Here we think that they do not go far enough. The King James Version is to our way of thinking, the great monument of English prose, so far overtopping any other that no thought of comparison can be entertained for a moment. We wish, therefore, that Harvard had turned the cold shoulder a little more squarely against the other "standard versions, ancient or modern." It has long been a matter of wonderment to us that anyone should pretend to write English or pretend to appreciate the immense power, the inexhaustible resources and the impressive nobleness of the English language, without having been, as one may say, born and bred to the King James Version. The Cambridge scholars are right, in our judgment; it simply can not be done.

ANOTHER excellent provision made by Harvard is that henceforth those who "specialize" in any department of modern languages must become acquainted with the works of at least two authors among the following: Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles, Cicero, Horace and Virgil. Those who specialize in ancient languages must know at least two of the following: Dante, Cervantes, Chaucer, Molière, Milton and Goethe. We should substitute Rabelais for Molière, and we have great doubts about the place of Cicero on the former list. But that is relatively a small matter, and probably we are wrong about it. The important thing is that the principle upon which this provision is based, that "the history of literature is continuous," is a sound one, and too much can not be done in defending and upholding it. American colleges and universities, as at present organized, can at best do but little for it, unfortunately; and it is a pleasure to remark that Harvard University so clearly sees the need of doing what it can.

"THE precept and example of the Congress lifting its voice in song at the opening of its daily sessions to the stirring strains of that wonderful anthem, 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' which has been an ornament and strength to our nation, will stir the patriotic impulses and be a daily inspiration to every American." In these widespread words, Representative Appleby of New Jersey explains to the press and the public his reasons for introducing into Congress a bill to make morning choir-practice compulsory upon that body, as morning chapel now is. If the gentleman from New Jersey had said only half as much, his language, and the picture he suggests, would still have affected us profoundly. We are ready to sacrifice ourselves without stint or limit for the great cause of musical conscription. We will even go Representative Appleby one better. We will give him the amount of our next income-tax assessment for his Presidential campaign in 1924, if he will so broaden the scope of his bill as to restrict the activities of Congress entirely to song and prayer.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

IS DISARMAMENT POSSIBLE?

LAST week we mentioned some commendable efforts put forth by several influential individuals and institutions in behalf of disarmament; and since then the Presbyterian Church has made its counsels known, Brother Bill Bryan has opened his heart on the subject, and the United States Senate has empowered and authorized Mr. Harding to call the Governments of Great Britain and Japan into conference to see what can be done. Thus it seems as though a good deal of miscellaneous volubility, if nothing else, might be devoted to disarmament before the summer is over. This is excellent. Every argument alleged in favour of the limitation of armaments is, as far as we have examined them, sound and unanswerable. Competition in armament is absurd, immoral, shockingly expensive, and it ought to be abolished. All these truths being self-evident, this paper has hitherto refrained from emphasizing them, notwithstanding our belief that popular agitation based upon them may do some good, even though it fail of its direct purpose, and certainly can do no harm. But these arguments are the stock pleas of our liberal friends and of others who, like them, think that disarmament depends merely on getting such ideas inculcated into a sufficient number of politicians; and since we never held this view, we have been inclined to let the arguments go for granted. We are interested in more fundamental aspects of the question, aspects that for some reason are always carefully avoided in any public discussion of the subject; and because they are more fundamental and because no one else ever talks about them, we prefer to lay stress on them rather than to become a mere echo of the stock arguments which bear upon high morals and fiscal economy.

Sentiment is a fine thing; so is economy. Neither is half enough practised. We are all for the elevated sentiment of our liberal friends and Brother Bryan, and all for lightening the burdens of the taxpayers. Considerations of sentiment, however, and considerations of economy, will never compel disarmament. Fully appreciating all that the Presbyterian Church and the Chicago conference and Senator Borah and Brother Bryan have to say, and consenting with all our heart to every word of it, we wish to ask them one plain question: As long as landlordism enforces the wholesale exportation of capital, how can this nation disarm? We agree to all the perfervid utterances of our liberal friends and feel ennobled and animated whenever we read them, but being of a prosaic turn, we can not help suggesting to our liberal contemporaries and to the *New York World* which has been very much to the fore in this discussion, that they go down to the statistical department of one of the great banks and get an estimate of the amount of capital exported from the United States since the armistice. We think that if they did this, the idea would gradually grow upon them that there is much more to this undertaking of disarmament than is met by their arguments.

Nations do not arm to the teeth for the fun of the thing. While we would be the very last to have a good word to say for officeholders, we do not believe that they sanction international competition in armament merely because they get some kind of devilish comfort out of it. Neither is the banker, who is the chief agent of financial imperialism, a bold, bad man, plotting deliberately and desperately against a nation's peace by sending great masses of capital out of the country for investment abroad. Not a bit of it. The officeholder,

though the poorest sort alive, is seldom a creature of evil instincts. The banker is usually a man of middle age or more, of rather commonplace parts and attainments, of limited outlook, unlikely ever to set the river afire; a man with a great deal of money, some of it his, perhaps, but most of it not his, and under obligation to make that money yield the largest possible return consistent with safety. This obligation sits by his elbow all day and roosts on his chest at night. Very well: that money goes where it will do itself the most good, and that place is invariably where the exactions of landlordism are lightest. Two considerations determine the direction of capital; cheap land (land, that is, in the economic sense, not the colloquial sense) and cheap labour. Capital naturally and inevitably takes the course set for it by these factors, and there is nothing deliberately provocative in the intention of the capitalist. Nevertheless, it ought to be fairly obvious that as long as any considerable outflow of capital takes place, disarmament is impossible; and that as long as landlordism monopolizes the natural resources of a country, this outflow must go on.

The profits of investment in domestic industry are sharply limited by the exactions of natural-resource monopoly. When industry has finished paying the landlord, the Government's afflictive taxes, and the going wage for labour, the returns upon capital are not high enough to outbid the attraction of investment elsewhere. If there be tin in Timbuctoo, if capital can get a concession from a corrupt Government there, and if there be furthermore a lot of lazy natives idling around, who can be driven off the land and thus compelled to labour in industry, capital will flow from the United States into Timbuctoo; likewise from England, from Germany, and from France, forced from those countries as from this country, by the exactions of landlordism. How, then, is disarmament possible, even supposing that all the English, German, French and American people were, to a man, convinced that both good morals and good economy required it? It is not possible.

With no disparagement of either morals, or economy, we wish that our Presbyterian brethren, Mr. Borah, Mr. Bryan and our liberal friends would take a little less superficial view of the evil that they are trying to combat, and get down to the level of fact. If they are really interested in disarmament and the promotion of international peace, the place to begin is not with economy, and certainly not with morals and sentiment, but with the diversion of capital from domestic enterprise to foreign enterprise, thereby constituting just so many "American interests" to be protected and promoted, as the newspapers, whenever there is the remotest chance of their being threatened, assure us they must be. Mr. Borah and Mr. Bryan are eloquent men who sometimes carry conviction to large audiences. They will do the cause of disarmament a great service if they will stop talking morals and economy and give figures for the exportation of American capital since the armistice; showing the astonishing multiplication of "American interests" all over the world, and the various places where those interests have taken root. Then let them discuss the phenomenon of that exportation, answering the simple question, Why was that immense volume of capital exported from an absurdly under-developed country, instead of being kept at work here? This method of approach would throw a clear light on the question of disarmament. The approach by way of morals and economy gets nowhere. It has all been done before, and our liberal friends, the moralists and the retrenchers have not thereby ad-

vanced their cause by as much as a hair's breadth; nor will they now. For all that will actually take place from the present discussion of disarmament, our friends may quite as well save their breath to cool their broth. If ever they make up their minds to approach the problem of international peace by the avenue that Richard Cobden opened, they will have better fortune; if not, then not.

WHAT LABOUR MIGHT DO.

IN its last issue this paper noted the tendency of many people who endure the exactions of monopoly more or less as a matter of course, to become alarmed and indignant over the exactions of organized labour such as the railway-operators are charging against the railway-labour organizations under the national agreements of the war-period. This paper does not know how much truth there may be in the operators' various complaints: that they have been obliged to pay punitive overtime; that they have been obliged to pay four or five men for doing what one man might have done in *ante-bellum* days; that they have been forced to disgorge huge amounts in back pay in cases where workers have been reclassified, etc. etc. However this may be we are fairly certain of one thing, that no matter how much unearned money labour may have acquired under those agreements, it could not in that respect hope to rival the acquisitive skill of the operators themselves, who have had years of experience in collecting from the shareholders, the public, and from labour itself, enormous amounts in unearned revenues.

For our part we have never been able to see that it is more immoral for a labour-union to exact four hours' pay for one hour's work, merely because it is in a position to do so, than it is for an employer to employ workmen under sweatshop conditions because the existence of a labour-surplus makes such conditions enforceable. Nevertheless we believe that if labour hopes to make any permanent gain through organization, such tactics as it has hitherto pursued are abysmally foolish, for they give employers a powerful weapon to use against the unions when the period of labour's advantage is past and the fight to set its gains aside begins; moreover such tactics do immeasurable injury to labour's cause with the public.

This paper has often dwelt upon the futility of organized labour's close adherence to trade-union issues, which may be brushed aside the moment a surplus appears in the labour-market. The narrowness of those issues, their lack of appeal to popular sympathy, and the petty abuses which are likely to be practised under them, make them pretty poor ground on which to invite public support; so that when the time comes that the gains of organized labour can be set aside, as they are being set aside to-day, there is likely to be scant public sympathy with labour's side of the case, even on the part of those whose interests, if they but knew it, are identical with the interests of the working masses. If organized labour, therefore, would set about discovering what its cause really is, it would put itself in the way of finding a mode of approach to the popular sympathy and co-operation which it needs, and of making a permanent betterment in its condition.

The monopolists and those who profit indirectly through monopoly are in truth mortally afraid of the potential power of an informed and aggressive body of labour; and they are naturally using every means in their power to discredit the policies of the labour-unions with the public. Thus far, so it seems to us, organized labour has pretty consistently played into the

hands of its opponents. Whether or not the recent charges made by the railway-operators are true, labour's narrow insistence upon trade-union issues has given the operators the chance to complain that its demands were extortionate. If, on the other hand, the railway labour-unions, instead of worrying about national agreements, had seized the opportunity offered by the brief moment of power that came to them during the war, to insist without compromise upon the removal of the roads from the control of the monopolists, they would have had a real issue on which to appeal to the public, one in which the public would have been quick to realize its own interest; and thus while improving its own condition organized labour might have done the country the inestimable service of insuring that its transportation-system should be used as a transportation-system and not as a medium for the use of the taxing power which has been delegated to the railway-companies by the Government. But labour did not so utilize its opportunity, and now the unions, the roads, and the general public are quite as much at the mercy of the operators as ever they were before the war.

From the point of view of the outsider there is no more reason that the public should interest itself in helping labour to get the upper hand of its employers than that it should interest itself in helping the employers against their recalcitrant labourers. Indeed, the public is rather more likely to be against labour in such a case, since it is obliged to pay, through increased prices, for much of labour's gains.

A large proportion of the general public is of course vaguely aware that all is not well with the present order, but it is far from being convinced that matters would be improved if labour were given the upper hand; and indeed, labour's record up to date has not been such as to create much popular demand for such a change. But if the labour-unions were to undertake the abolition of monopoly, leaving trade-union issues to be taken care of after that piece of work had been accomplished, it might confidently expect to find a substantial body of support, among such people as tenant-farmers, industrialists who now pay a heavy toll to privilege, and large classes of professional people, who, although members of the middle class, are quite as much the victims of privilege as are the manual workers. It is not morality, but common sense, which demands that labour, if it is to win lasting freedom from industrial exploitation, abandon the largely futile tactics which it has hitherto pursued.

THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY.

Now that our thousand-per-centers are threatening to push their holy war against bolshevism into the collegiate field, we feel disposed to take these valiant crusaders into our confidence, and to impart to them our reasons for believing that they will find the academic sector very feebly defended. These reasons are in no sense statistical; they are not floated upon any estimate of the number of undergraduate members of this or that society; they are fundamental to our own private appraisal of the very nature of collegiate life and the collegiate population.

It seems to us that, in general, there are two conditions of life, and two corresponding mental states, that make for a certain degree of receptivity to new ideas. Where the individual happens to live in hereditary ease at the expense of the established order, a kind of mental abstraction and detachment may result. On the other hand, the man who is scourged continuously by circumstance will sometimes be driven to a rebellious search

for things new and different. Thus, in the aristocratic cynic who has enjoyed everything and the proletarian who has suffered everything, one may frequently discover a common inquisitiveness and a common discontent.

Now to our way of thinking, the typical American collegian has neither the impersonal tolerance that sometimes characterizes a well-subsidized mind, nor the alertness that belongs to the unruly proletarian. The college man is neither disillusioned nor congenitally without illusions. He is neither detached from the established order of life, nor crushed by it. Generally speaking, he intends, and his parents intend for him, that he shall participate respectfully and successfully in the further expansion and perfectionment of the existing system of exploitation. He will live at the expense of this system, of course, but he will not live on top of it, or under it; he will live *in* it, and the chief interest of his life will attach to his part in its operations. In other words, he will be primarily a builder, with all a builder's impatience of any change of plans while the job is still unfinished. Naturally he will suffer few animal deprivations; he will enjoy few intellectual pleasures; he will live in a median state of material activity, progress and optimism. He will be a "straw-boss" on the Tower of Babel.

Such, we believe, are the great expectations of the typical college man. With their effect upon the collegian's later years, we have no immediate concern. It will be enough if we can show that the student-world itself is a diminutive model of the sort of world that such ambitions would naturally demand for their fulfilment.

The life of the student-body of the average American college is primarily and essentially a life of mass-action, rather than a life of individual thought. Distinction belongs to the man who does things, and to him alone. "Activities" abound, and analysis, criticism and speculation are as much out of place as they would be at a Chamber of Commerce banquet. Conventionality flourishes under the patronage of fraternities and honour societies which exercise an influence quite without parallel in the outside world. Class-discipline sometimes even imposes uniformity of attire, and the whole system heads up in a "college spirit" that is a pretty exact equivalent for national patriotism. Indeed the temper of the active, intolerant and uncritical college-community inevitably suggests that of a nation perpetually at war.

Since the student-body is so completely devoted to action rather than to thought, the members of the faculty are alternately occupied with efforts to repress the former and to induce the latter. A disciplinary system wholly unknown to the European university is organized for the double purpose of making the students behave themselves, and making them study. Physical and mental regimentation is the natural response of officialdom to the student's abuse of freedom, but the routine study enforced under this system is in no real sense a corrective for the narrowness of the student's mental environment.

If there is one single phase of the active and thoughtless life of the American collegian that tends naturally to the production of spiritual unrest, it has thus far escaped our notice. In fact, it seems to us that the student who is willing to look critically upon the American scene is in no sense a product of the collegiate system; rather he is one who has escaped from it, and his escape has not been easy, for it has necessitated, first of all, a searching and defiant revaluation of his own immediate surroundings.

THE QUALITY OF LIFE.

FEAR, like any other human passion, is not essentially ignoble. Even the fear of everlasting damnation, which once affected conduct so powerfully, was in itself a wholesome and respectable emotion, and became ignoble only when it was treated in an exaggerated and unintelligent way. One special mode or form of fear is just now vindicating itself as the beginning of wisdom, quite as impressively as it did to the discerning eye of Solomon. One can not follow the course of public affairs at the present time without being painfully reminded that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; a fearful thing to trifle, as our politicians and militarists do, with the august moral order of the universe. It seems under the circumstances, rather a pity that ecclesiasticism has perverted and mechanized the general conception of these emotions to a point where one may no longer speak of the fear of God or the fear of hell except at the risk of becoming unfashionable. The irrationality and extravagance so long connoted by these vivid forms of speech have sunk the whole stream of popular religious consciousness out of sight and set it running underground. There is to-day, curiously, as deep a diffidence, as positive and invincible a prudery, about bringing to light an intimate religious experience, as ever repressed the revelation of the most colourless sex-experience in the hey-day of Victorianism when discussion of religious experience was frank, free and in many quarters, fashionable. Once Wesley, now Freud! It is an interesting study in the oddities of taboo.

The fear of damnation, depraved by ecclesiasticism into what might be called an unwholesome public usage, has apparently been supplanted in our civilization by the fear of dirt, disease and death. This fear also is not in itself an ignoble passion; quite the contrary. It becomes ignoble and retarding, however, when it is treated as an end in itself, as something fixed and absolute; and nowhere is it so treated as in our civilization. In scanning the advertisements which appear in popular magazines and public conveyances, one is struck by the extraordinary number of them which appeal directly to the fear of dirt, the fear of disease or the fear of death. Their terms, really, are almost those of a ritual; their temper is the temper of ecclesiasticism. Foods, drinks, cigarettes, patent medicines, soap, tooth-paste, physical culture, even real estate and town-planning schemes, are advertised in terms which could hardly be more earnestly reverential in the veneration they express for the object of a great popular cult. One firm which deals in plumber's supplies, if we remember correctly, quotes Sir James Foster Fraser's remark that "the symbol of America is not the Stars and Stripes; it is the bathroom." There is a certain humour about this, upon which one may not dwell; doubtless Sir James Foster Fraser had his tongue in his cheek when he said it. But there is no humour in the spirit which soberly and reverently lifts this utterance and employs it for advertising purposes. It would pay any one who in these difficult times is really concerned to get some measure of the spiritual life of this country, to know what manner of spirit we are of, to examine the prodigious literature of advertising now current, and see to what extent it reflects this stark dread of dirt, disease and death.

The collective instinct of humanity, which is a sure guide, speaks against a fixed and morbid preoccupation of this kind; and we frequently find this instinct

reflected in the cynical comments scribbled by idlers on these advertisements in public places. It was the self-preserving instinct of the race that finally reacted against the perversions which ecclesiasticism had put upon the intense preoccupation with heaven and hell. This instinct bred a healthy dissatisfaction with the ethics of conduct which was sheerly determined by the fear of hell. It was impatient with the man who behaved himself with no larger motive than to avoid being damned; it felt that such a character was untempered, incomplete. It was aware of a ludicrous incongruity in this strictly limited and personal view of one's relations to this present world. The Prince de Ligne had the collective instinct of humanity solidly with him in his ironical observation on Frederick II. "The king attached a great deal of importance to his own damnation," he said. "He usually had much more to say about it than it was worth."

Perhaps it is time for our civilization to heed the promptings of the self-preserving instinct in the matter of these newer preoccupations. Epictetus remarked—and we think that he too had the collective instinct of humanity on his side—that it was the mark of a poor and incomplete character to be fussing about exercise, eating, drinking, walking, riding. "All these things should be purely incidental," he said, "and our actual concern should be with the development of the spirit and character." There is no denying that a clean, healthy, long-lived people has a great advantage in undertaking and directing this development; the only question is whether an incessant, exaggerated preoccupation with cleanliness, health and longevity does not cancel that advantage. It is a fine thing to have good teeth, good digestion, to be sound in wind and limb; yet the real question is what a person makes of himself, of his spirit and character, with all these points in his favour. If he takes care of his teeth and stomach merely to keep out of trouble with them, his virtue is felt to be as untempered and incomplete as the virtue of his forbears who took care of their conscience in order to keep out of hell. It is a fine thing to live a hundred years; yet if one's master-interest is merely in long life, without "reference to the services of the mind," as Franklin said, it is doubtful whether long life has value. When one considers the fierce, dogged, obstinate, almost bloodthirsty clinging to life that is attested by the innumerable devices and researches calculated to prolong it, or when one sees public officials going about in the care of hired guards, one thinks of Julius Cæsar declaring that life is not worth having at the expense of a petty and ignoble solicitude about it. Cæsar was struck down at the base of Pompey's statue, and is dead; Socrates, who shared his view, drank hemlock, and is dead; yet the self-preserving instinct of humanity would testify that they were right.

Certain impatient spirits in the old days, surveying the untempered and dissatisfying lives of those whose master-interest was determined by the fear of hell, used to say plainly that the thought of hell was more attractive to them than the thought of heaven, and that they would much prefer to go there. We all remember Ethan Allen's deliberate interruption of the tedious Calvinist preacher, with "Anybody here may have my chance!" We also recall Rabelais's account of Epistemon's brief sojourn in hell, and the extremely interesting and delightful people whom he found residing there.

There is in this, perhaps, an allegory for our civilization to consider, as we remark the number of useful persons, mostly young, vigorous and able, who are

leaving America. They know that the food here is better, conditions more sanitary, disease less plentiful. Yet they go because, they say, there is a sterile hardness and dullness in American life which they feel they must escape at any cost. Well, let them go, of course. Still, while it is a fine thing for a community to have a low death-rate and first-class sanitation and a favourable bathtub-census, the question is after all, of the quality of the life lived there; the question is whether the bathtubs and the longevity and the physical health conduce to a collective life that is dull and superficial or one that is lived from a profound depth of being. Is it an *interesting* life, has it flavour and savour, is it spiced richly with the spice of individualism; or does it all taste alike wherever one bites into it, and all taste like blotting-paper? This is the question which the self-preserving instinct in humanity will put to our preoccupation with dirt, disease and death, as it questioned—and effectively questioned—the ancestral preoccupation with heaven and hell; and our civilization will be in the long run judged by the verdict of this instinct, not by that of our exiles and expatriates.

PEASANTS AND PIONEERS.

"If I were writing about this mess, I should call it 'the Anglo-German War,' because that's exactly what it was. France didn't count. She was done for, long before the war began, and in no condition to threaten anybody."

My friend has a way of saying these argumentative things, and then dashing away before I have gathered breath to answer him. This time, however, his continued presence could not have drawn me into debate, for his reference to France had set off a train of recollection that flickered comfortably enough to warm any argument to sleep.

France in decay! Here was the forest of Amboise, darkening the borders of the wheatlands and the vineyards above the Loire. At the crest of the hill, the generous fields rolled into the shadows and disappeared. The road turned and then straightened out again, a white path through the trees, responding to each foot-fall with a minute thud, and a deliberate puff of dust. Through the fields behind us, and on ahead to the indeterminate point where the sunlight melted the highway into haze, the road was guarded by a line of stone-heaps, each like every other, each exactly measured to meet the needs of just so many square yards of roadway, through just so many years of time.

In the forest, woodcutters had been at work. Underfoot the grass was somewhat faded with the lateness of the season, while the foliage had taken on the heavy green of earliest autumn. Through all the visible distances, this dark ceiling was supported by tree-trunks distributed with a deliberate art that left space for heaps of brush and piles of logs of different sizes—the measured yield of just so many acres of woodland for just so many years of time.

With the full warm sunlight on the road, it was rather heavy going as the afternoon wore on. Finally the trees drew back to leave space for a few acres of stubble and a dozen rows of vines, all centring upon a solid stone house, sleepy-eyed, with eaves bent down toward the earth. A well-head suggested possibilities of refreshment, and the kitchen door opened on cool shadows. We asked for water, but the wood-chopper, just in from work, would by no means hear of it. He knocked about in the corner for a moment, and then shuffled back to us with a tall bottle in his hand. His wife and his two children appeared from some inner recess, and all of us drank comfortably together. Then when we had pocketed the coins that were refused the moment they appeared, we went off down the road, leaving the woodchopper smacking his lips with the savour of a life that promised to renew itself from his just-sufficient acres for an uncountable number of years.

When we had washed our faces at the pump in the courtyard of the inn at Chenonceau, we asked the extravagance of a small fire to warm our dining-hour. Although the air had chilled a bit at sunset, the keeper of the inn was filled with astonishment at our request. Of course, of course, we should have a fire, if we were sure we really wanted it. We were sure, and by way of showing as much, we made advances towards the small pile of sticks beside the fire-place. This

was enough. Politely but with exceeding firmness, our host interposed, and laid the fire himself. It blazed up presently to the dimension of three candle-flames; and at rare intervals thereafter when a fresh stick was placed upon the coals, the operation was performed with delicacy, almost with a caress of farewell. The winter's wood was in, and it must last for the calculated number of months; and back of this there may have been the thought that the forest of Amboise had yielded its periodic harvests for a thousand years or so already, and would most certainly last a good many thousands of years more, if people would only be careful.

If some such consideration as this were everlastingly present in the minds of the lesser folk of France, one might find in it an adequate explanation of the fond tenderness with which they watch over all material things. Nature has given them, not riches, but a competence. Somewhere on earth there may be new farms and new forests, but the villagers know better than to count on it. Apparently they consider each of their communities a finished world, left to run its own course in space and time. Under such conditions, houses must endure, fields must keep their fertility, forests must nurture new trees where old ones have been cut away. In other words, men and nature must be so nicely suited to each other that life will continuously renew and re-create itself, out of its own inherited materials. Whenever men discover that by the limitation of population and the stoppage of waste, they can with comparative ease affect such an adjustment, there is likely to grow up among them a mellow friendliness for the earth and for each other, which adds much to the savour of life. In the contemplative quiet of the provincial cafés of France one gets this savour, and thus learns something of the soul's comfort that comes to a people who have found a permanent home upon the surface of the earth.

By contrast with all this, the life of the pioneer is a barbarian's life, and the imperial expansion of nations is an emanation of enduring barbarism. The feverish clamour for new lands and new resources is in itself a confession of failure to achieve any sort of accommodation of life to environment, and environment to life. The whole concept of progress seems to call for extravagant production to keep pace with extravagant waste. If a prosperous and progressive nation has burned up its store of petroleum, no one ever thinks of suggesting that consumption should be checked; expansion into new territory is the thing, and if some other nation happens to be trying the same expedient at the same time, war is the natural outcome.

Swelling populations and bursting boundaries may sometimes bring a general increase in the enjoyment of life, but as time passes there is less and less likelihood that this will be so, for progressive adjustment is the only sort of progress that can continue peacefully and indefinitely. Already a few understanding individuals in our own country and a multitude of communities over seas have fallen in as best they can with the comfortable circular course of nature, but all the mechanism of life is set against them. Officially the nations are still fortune-hunting pioneers, and for the present all the efforts of the governing classes seem to be directed towards keeping the balance of the people permanently bogged down in the era of exploitation.

GEROID TANQUARY ROBINSON.

CHEKHOV'S NOTEBOOK.

A LITTLE girl with rapture about her aunt: "She is very beautiful, as beautiful as our dog!"

IN a love letter: "Stamp enclosed for a reply."

THE best men leave the villages for the towns, and therefore the villages decline and will continue to decline.

PAVEL was a cook for forty years; he loathed the things he cooked and never ate.

HE ceased to love a woman; the sensation of not being in love; a peaceful state of mind; long, peaceful thoughts.

CONSERVATIVE people do so little harm because they are timid and have no confidence in themselves; harm is done not by conservative but by malicious people.

FOR a play; an old woman of radical views dresses like a girl, smokes, can not exist without company, sympathetic.

IN a Pullman car—these are the dregs of society.

ON the lady's bosom was the portrait of a fat German.

THEY undressed the corpse, but had no time to take the gloves off; a corpse in gloves.

A FARMER at dinner boasts: "Life in the country is cheap—one has one's own chickens, one's own pigs—life is cheap."

A CUSTOMS official, from mere love for his work, searches the passengers, looking for documents of a suspicious political nature, and makes even the gendarmes indignant.

A REAL male (*mouzhchina*) consists of man (*mouzh*) and title (*tchin*).

EDUCATION: "Masticate your food properly," their father told them. And they masticated properly, and walked two hours every day, and washed in cold water, and yet they turned out unhappy and without talent.

N., FORTY years old, married a girl of seventeen. The first night, when they had returned to his mining village, she went to bed and suddenly burst into tears, because she did not love him. He is a good soul, is overwhelmed with distress, and goes off to sleep in his little working-room.

ON the spot where the former manor house stood there is no trace left; only one lilac bush remains and that for some reason does not bloom.

N. GOES to X. every day, talks to him, and shows real sympathy in his grief; suddenly X. leaves his house, where he was so comfortable. N. asks X.'s mother why he went away. She answers: "Because you came to see him every day."

IT was such a romantic wedding, and later—what fools! what babies!

LOVE. Either it is a remnant of something degenerating, something which once has been immense, or it is a particle of what will in the future develop into something immense; but in the present it is unsatisfying, it gives much less than one expects.

A VERY intellectual man all his life tells lies about hypnotism, spiritualism—and people believe him; yet he is quite a nice man.

A GRANDMOTHER has six sons and three daughters, and best of all she loves the failure, who drinks and has been in prison.

N., THE manager of a factory, rich, with a wife and children, happy, wrote "An investigation into the mineral spring at X." He was much praised for it and was invited to join the staff of a newspaper; he gave up his post, went to Petersburg, divorced his wife, spent his money—and went to the dogs.

ALAS, what is terrible is not the skeletons, but the fact that I am no longer terrified by them.

A BOY of good family, capricious, full of mischief, obstinate, wore out his whole family. The father, an official who played the piano, got to hate him, took him into a corner of the garden, flogged him with considerable pleasure, and then felt disgusted with himself. The son has grown up and is an officer and the father still felt disgusted with himself for having flogged him.

A STORM at sea. Lawyers ought to regard it as a crime.

X. WENT to stay with his friend in the country. The place was magnificent, but the servants treated him badly, he was uncomfortable, although his friend considered him a

big man. The bed was hard, he was not provided with a night-shirt and he felt ashamed to ask for one.

At a rehearsal. The wife: "How does that melody of Pagliacci go? Whistle it."

"One must not whistle on the stage; the stage is a temple."

He died from fear of cholera.

As like as a nail is to a requiem.

A CONVERSATION on another planet about the earth a thousand years hence. "Do you remember that white tree?"

TREAT your dismissal as you would an atmospheric phenomenon.

A CONVERSATION at a conference of doctors. First doctor: "All diseases can be cured by salt." Second doctor, military: "Every disease can be cured by prescribing no salt." The first points to his wife, the second to his daughter.
(To be continued.)

THE OPEN SHOP AND AFTER.

THE really significant thing about the so-called open-shop drive is the ready acceptance and approval of its doctrine by thousands of plain people who are not directly in the manual working group. Even when we discount the extent to which this is due to an excellently organized propaganda, a considerable body of earnest and unprovoked response remains. When also we discount the extent to which the campaign is promoted by the selfishness and fear of certain groups who resent any infringement upon their economic power, there remains a large body of support for the open-shop idea which proceeds from opinions which are completely disinterested and even generous. The American public, nursed on the pioneer-doctrine of the glory of free and untrammelled individual enterprise, has frankly never fully accepted the ethical or industrial soundness of collective bargaining, and the present crystallization of opinion against the trade union constitutes a challenge to the labour-groups in the community to understand why they have not made more rapid headway in convincing the middle-class public that the fundamental tenets of trade unionism are really a fulfilment under modern conditions of the best American traditions.

It is, indeed, conceivable that in the policies, practices and tactics of the unions there are features which have grown up naturally and inevitably but which are to-day either actually or in the construction the public puts upon them, ill-advised and a source of irritation or positive opposition. No good is to be gained by ignoring the probability that the general hostility to trade unionism arises in part from this source; rather is it in the interest of advancing the sound idea that is inherent in labour-organization, that these shortcomings and misunderstandings be faced. Hitherto whenever the open-shop agitation has come into the open its arguments have remained largely on the surface, buttressed by windy rhetoric or sweeping denunciation.

The points which have been raised in the case against the unions and against collective bargaining with them deserve explicit examination by the unions themselves and by their supporters. None of the adverse points can be said to be true of all unions; and there is no union of which all of them are true. All generalizations in this field must be modified by the admission of many exceptions. The following objections, however, are familiar:

(1) Some unions coerce individuals into membership as the basis of securing employment. This is said

to be an unwarranted infringement of individual liberty.

(2) Some unions tacitly agree to limitations upon individual output and by charging standard rates for all journeymen discourage the efficiency of the best workers.

(3) Some unions put every obstacle in the way of introducing labour-saving machinery.

(4) Some unions charge such high initiation fees that the new worker is practically excluded; and some unions set up such difficult apprenticeship-rules that the membership is not replacing itself.

(5) In some unions the local business agent interferes unwarrantedly in the affairs of individual shops, and in some the gap is so wide between the national officers and the local leaders that the former try in vain to assume responsibility for the carrying out of local agreements.

(6) Some unions for one reason or another have been known to break their agreements.

(7) Some unions allow sympathetic strikes and secondary boycotts to interrupt the carrying out of local agreements.

(8) Some unions use threatening language or revolutionary idioms in stating their "demands."

Each of these points, it should be conceded, has some substance of fact behind it, and it is not to be wondered at that in the aggregate these facts are apt to prejudice most people on the union-issue. There is not here the space to explain the genesis or extent of these policies and practices, or to indicate the modifications respecting them which are or may be in process to-day, although a historic perspective upon them is essential to a just understanding of their present vogue. The object here is rather to show that the foregoing objections to trade unionism call attention to weaknesses in the application of the idea of collective bargaining, not in the idea of collective bargaining itself. They are largely defects of method, not of principle; defects due in part to the exigencies of an offensive and defensive struggle on the part of a young movement.

Indeed some of the features of collective bargaining—including the name—have been endorsed and accepted by those more intelligent but less strident advocates of the open shop who realize their need of a positive programme. The shop-committee movement of the last few years, for example, is animated as much by a sincere and positive desire to reach a basis both for group-negotiation and for that co-operation of the workers which results from their fuller knowledge of the facts of a business, as it is to a merely negative desire "to keep out the unions." The arguments of the advocate of the open shop must necessarily shift sooner or later—and the sooner the better—from those narrowly controversial grounds where abstractions like "equality" and "liberty" are bandied about with great passion, to those more scientific considerations where the central issue is: what type of intergroup-relationship supplies the soundest foundation both for effective business administration and for giving the manual worker an increasingly self-respecting status in the community?

The problem as a whole, of course, has its more involved phases. It might plausibly be maintained, for example, that the conflict of interest which is dramatized in the open-shop drive is not at all between employers as such and workers, that it is only secondarily a question of factory-management or production-control. It is in one view a conflict between the producing groups—managers and manual workers—and those who control the issuance of credit. "The last word on

policy," says one observant industrial engineer, "is with finance, not with administration, and is concerned with the control of credit by the banks; and to democratize the policy of production we have to democratize the control of credit."

Whether or not this be true, the present agitation is in fact being conducted in large part by business men who are as yet hardly conscious of the control which their banks ultimately exercise over them. Their arguments are focused primarily on productivity, co-operation, harmony and understanding in the shop. It is on these grounds that every group concerned in the controversy should be willing to see the discussion advanced. I do not here deny that there may possibly be a measure of opposition to the unions which is directly fostered by the banks for their own reasons; but the facts regarding this remain to be established.

If, therefore, the case for the open shop and the negotiative machinery which seems to go with it, is to be argued on grounds of fundamental shop-efficiency and effective administrative procedure, it should at once be realized that the shop-committee idea has certain logical implications and possibilities in the direction of which it is bound to develop—or else go to pieces because of the revealed motives of those employers who will not allow it to function along its own lines of growth. If in the steel-industry, for example, each important concern possessed a shop-committee which really negotiated (and not merely offered opinions) on wage-rates, the wage-rates of the industry as a whole might tend to get out of line. This would lead to a demand to equalize them, which might lead in turn to a demand for a meeting of all the shop-committees, or of delegates from all of them, to consider the feasibility of more uniform wage-levels. Special committees would inevitably be chosen to inquire into the facts and to make recommendations. Other common interests and other problems would be discovered; regular meetings of the delegates from the industry as a whole would be called for; the work entailed in making those meetings function properly would take more and more time. A paid executive would be required. When all this had happened, the question arises whether the steel-industry would have a labour-policy very different in fact from that of collective bargaining with labour-unions, or would the then existing negotiating machinery be essentially different from that which would be built up under a well-drawn collective agreement?

Any adequate analysis of the administrative problems in contemporary economic organization reveals, in short, different functions at successive levels with group-interests widening as the higher levels are reached. Each shop-department has its own problems which are properly cared for when departmental functionaries handle them. Each factory as a whole has also its own problems; and it soon finds that these can not all be settled without reference to the activities of local competitors and ultimately to competitors throughout the entire trade. This is as true of labour-policy and procedure as it is true of price-policy, advertising or any other administrative activity.

If it be agreed that all this is true but that it has little bearing on the problem of the open shop, the answer is clear. Either the open-shop idea must develop negotiative machinery which is elastic enough to be used eventually for a whole industry at a time, or else the genuine collective-bargaining idea with national agreements or joint industrial councils like the Whitley Councils in England must after all come into being. In the long run, the basis of decision in this matter

rests upon the comparative administrative efficiency of the two forms; and upon the facts as to the actual status and sense of self-respect which every member of each group is conscious of attaining. This is only a controversial issue up to the point where experiment and experience supply fact-data from which accurate judgments can be drawn. Already a considerable body of evidence is at hand as to the basis for self-respecting and co-operative administrative relations. Yet the most ardent trade-union advocates would to-day concede that their most successful extant collective agreements do not represent the last word in administrative wisdom, nor do they give the manual worker the assurance of that new status in society which he is so insistently demanding.

But these agreements offer scientifically a good beginning, as good a beginning as is offered by the proposals of the open-shop advocates for either shop-committees or individual contracts. If the unions are not all eager to improve these instruments, the fault at the moment is not wholly theirs, for they are being forced legally and in practice into a defensive position where their right to associate at all is vigorously opposed. One of the prime objections to the present demand for the open shop is that it makes it so much harder to secure the interest of the unions in improved methods of collective dealing, methods which shall take cognizance of such public criticisms of trade unionism as those enumerated above. If one could feel confident that the present national campaign against the unions was intended or was calculated to lead the unions to a re-examination of policy, there would be less cause for apprehension. But in the mid-stream of attack the unions not unnaturally feel that they must refrain from changing horses. The present campaign thus delays the realization of the very object which its honest promoters seek to accomplish by it.

Certain legitimate reasons for the open-shop "drive" are thus at least intelligible. It is expressive of a combination of genuine criticism, annoyance, fear and inadequate understanding of the true basis of administrative operation under modern industrial conditions. But whether or not this "drive" is best calculated to remove the causes of public irritation is exceedingly doubtful. There is a substantial body of American experience which suggests that sound industrial relations would be better served by putting collective bargaining upon a secure legal and administrative footing, than by destroying it through a propaganda as negative and vehement as the open-shop "drive."

ORDWAY TEAD.

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHEKHOV.

III

ANTON CHEKHOV had the art of revealing and driving away banality, an art which is only possible to a man who demands much from life and which comes from a keen desire to see men simple, beautiful, harmonious. Banality always found in him a discerning and merciless judge.

Some one told in his presence how the editor of a popular magazine, who was always talking of the necessity of love and pity, had, for no reason at all, insulted a railway guard, and how he usually acted with extreme rudeness towards his inferiors.

"Well," said Anton Pavlovitch with a gloomy smile, "but isn't he an aristocrat, an educated gentleman? He studied at the seminary. His father wore bast shoes, and he wears patent-leather boots." In his tone there was something which at once made the "aristocrat" trivial and ridiculous.

"He's a very gifted man," he said of a certain journalist. "He always writes so nobly, humanely, . . . lemonadely. Calls his wife a fool in public . . . the servants' rooms are damp and the maids constantly get rheumatics."

"Don't you like N. N., Anton Pavlovitch?"

"Yes, I do—very much. He's a pleasant fellow," Anton Pavlovitch agreed, coughing. "He knows everything, reads a lot . . . he hasn't returned three of my books, he's absent-minded. To-day he will tell you that you're a wonderful fellow, and to-morrow he will tell somebody else that you cheat your servants, and that you have stolen from your mistress's husband his silk socks—the black ones with the blue stripes."

Once some one in Chekhov's presence complained of the heaviness and tediousness of the "serious" sections in thick monthly magazines.

"But you mustn't read those articles," said Anton Pavlovitch. "They are friends' literature—written for friends. They are written by Messrs. Red, Black and White. One writes an article; the other replies to it; and the third reconciles the contradictions of the other two. It is like playing whist with a dummy. Yet none of them asks himself what good it is to the reader."

Once a plump, healthy, handsome, well-dressed lady came to him and began to speak *à la Chekhov*: "Life is so boring, Anton Pavlovitch. Everything is so grey: people, the sea, even the flowers seem to me grey; and I have no desires, my soul is in pain, it is like a disease."

"It is a disease," said Anton Pavlovitch with conviction, "it is a disease; in Latin it is called *morbus imitatis*."

Fortunately the lady did not seem to know Latin, or, perhaps, she pretended not to know it.

"Critics are like horse-flies which prevent the horse from ploughing," Chekhov once said, smiling his wise smile. "The horse works, all its muscles drawn tight like the strings on a double-bass, and a fly settles on his flanks and tickles and buzzes; he has to twitch his skin and swish his tail. And what does the fly buzz about? It scarcely knows itself; simply because it is restless and wants to proclaim: 'Look, I too am living on the earth. See, I can buzz, too, buzz about anything.' For twenty-five years I have read criticisms of my stories, and I don't remember a single remark of any value or one word of valuable advice. Only once Skabitchevsky wrote something which made an impression on me; he said I would die in a ditch, drunk."

Nearly always there was an ironical smile in his grey eyes, but at times they became cold, sharp, hard; at such times a harder tone sounded in his soft, sincere voice, and then it appeared that this modest, gentle man, when he found it necessary, could rouse himself vigorously against a hostile force and would not yield. But sometimes, I thought, there was in his attitude towards people a feeling of hopelessness, almost of cold, resigned despair.

"A Russian is a strange creature," he said once. "He is like a sieve; nothing remains in him. In his youth he fills himself greedily with anything which he comes across, and after thirty years nothing remains but a kind of grey rubbish. In order to live well and humanly one must work—work with love and with faith. But we, we can't do it. An architect, having built a couple of decent buildings, sits down to play cards, plays all his life, or else is to be found somewhere behind the scenes of some theatre. A doctor, if he has a practice, ceases to be interested in science, and reads nothing but the *Medical Journal*, and at forty seriously believes that all diseases have their origin in

catarrh. I have never met a single civil servant who had any idea of the meaning of his work: usually he sits in the metropolis or the chief town of the province, and writes papers and sends them off to Zmiev or Smorgon for attention. But that those papers will deprive some one in Zmiev or Smorgon of freedom of movement—of that the civil servant thinks as little as an atheist of the tortures of hell. A lawyer who has made a name by a successful defence ceases to care about justice, and defends only the rights of property, gambles on the turf, eats oysters, figures as a connoisseur of all the arts. An actor, having taken two or three parts tolerably, no longer troubles to learn his part, puts on a silk hat, and thinks himself a genius. Russia is a land of insatiable and lazy people; they eat enormously of nice things, drink, like to sleep in the daytime, and snore in their sleep. They marry in order to get their house looked after and keep mistresses in order to be thought well of in society. Their psychology is that of a dog: when they are beaten, they whine shrilly and run into their kennels; when petted, they lie on their backs with their paws in the air and wag their tails."

Pain and cold contempt sounded in these words. But, though contemptuous, he felt pity, and, if in his presence you abused anyone, Anton Pavlovitch would immediately defend him. "Why do you say that? He is an old man . . . he's seventy." Or: "But he's still so young . . . it's only stupidity." When he spoke like that, I never saw a sign of aversion in his face.

IV

WHEN a man is young, banality seems only amusing and unimportant, but little by little it possesses a man; it permeates his brain and blood like a poison or asphyxiating fumes; he becomes like an old, rusty signboard; something is painted on it, but what?—you can't make out.

Anton Chekhov in his early stories was already able to reveal in the dim sea of banality its tragic humour; one has only to read his "humorous" stories with attention to see what a lot of cruel and disgusting things, behind the humorous words and situations, had been observed by the author with sorrow and were concealed by him. He was ingenuously shy; he would not say aloud and openly to people: "Now do be more decent"; he hoped in vain that they would themselves see how necessary it was that they should be more decent. He hated everything banal and foul, and he described the abominations of life in the noble language of a poet, with the humorist's gentle smile, and behind the beautiful form of his stories people scarcely noticed the inner meaning, full of bitter reproach.

The dear public, when it reads his "Daughter of Albion," laughs and hardly realizes how abominable is the well-fed squire's mockery of a person who is lonely and strange to every one and everything. In each of his humorous stories I hear the quiet, deep sigh of a pure and human heart, the hopeless sigh of sympathy for men who do not know how to respect human dignity, who submit without any resistance to mere force, live like fish, believe in nothing but the necessity of swallowing every day as much thick soup as possible, and feel nothing but fear that some one, strong and insolent, will give them a hiding.

No one understood as clearly and finely as Anton Chekhov, the tragedy of life's trivialities; no one before him showed men with such merciless truth the terrible and shameful picture of their life in the dim chaos of bourgeois everyday existence.

His enemy was banality; he fought it all his life

long; he ridiculed it, drawing it with a pointed and unimpassioned pen, finding the mustiness of banality even where at the first glance everything seemed to be arranged very nicely, comfortably, and even brilliantly—and banality revenged itself upon him by a nasty prank, for it saw that his corpse, the corpse of a poet, was put into a railway truck "For the Conveyance of Oysters."

That dirty green railway truck seems to me precisely the great, triumphant laugh of banality over its tired enemy; and all the "Recollections" in the gutter press are hypocritical sorrow, behind which I feel the cold and smelly breath of banality, secretly rejoicing over the death of its enemy.

V

READING Anton Chekhov's stories, one feels oneself in a melancholy day of late autumn, when the air is transparent and the outline of naked trees, narrow houses, greyish people, is sharp. Everything is strange, lonely, motionless, helpless. The horizon, blue and empty, melts into the pale sky and its breath is terribly cold upon the earth which is covered with frozen mud. The author's mind, like the autumn sun, shows up in hard outline the monotonous roads, the crooked streets, the little squalid houses in which tiny, miserable people are stifled by boredom and laziness and fill the houses with an unintelligible, drowsy bustle. Here anxiously, like a grey mouse, scurries "The Darling" the dear, meek woman who loves so slavishly and who can love so much. You can slap her cheek and she won't even dare to utter a sigh aloud, the meek slave. By her side is Olga of "The Three Sisters": she too loves much, and submits with resignation to the caprices of the dissolute, banal wife of her good-for-nothing brother; the life of her sisters crumbles before her eyes, she weeps and can not help anyone in anything, and she has not within her a single live, strong word of protest against banality.

Here is the lachrymose Ranevskaya and the other owners of "The Cherry Orchard," egotistical like children, with the flabbiness of senility. They missed the right moment for dying; they whine, seeing nothing of what is going on around them, understanding nothing, parasites without the power of again taking root in life. The wretched little student, Trofimov, speaks eloquently of the necessity of working—and does nothing but amuse himself, out of sheer boredom, with stupid mockery of Varya, who works ceaselessly for the good of the idlers.

Vershinin dreams of how pleasant life will be in three hundred years, and lives without perceiving that everything around him is falling into ruin before his eyes; Solyony, from boredom and stupidity, is ready to kill the pitiable Baron Tausenbach.

There passes before one a long file of men and women, slaves of their love, of their stupidity and idleness, of their greed for the good things of life; there walk the slaves of the dark fear of life; they straggle anxiously along, filling life with incoherent words about the future, feeling that in the present there is no place for them.

At moments out of the grey mass of them one hears the sound of a shot: Ivanov or Triepiev has guessed what he ought to do, and has died.

Many of them have nice dreams of how pleasant life will be in two hundred years, but it occurs to none of them to ask himself who will make life pleasant if we only dream.

In front of that dreary, grey crowd of helpless people there passed a great, wise, and observant man; he looked at all these dreary inhabitants of his country,

and, with a sad smile, with a tone of gentle but deep reproach, with anguish in his face and in his heart, in a beautiful and sincere voice, he said to them: "You live badly, my friends. It is shameful to live like that."

MAXIM GORKY.

(The End.)

THE FAILURE OF MODERN CRITICISM.

CRITICISM was never so well equipped for a study of imagination as it is to-day. Realistic psychology has magically produced a complete laboratory in which to lay bare the soul at its work of making life over into art. Yet, except for such studies of dead masters as Mr. Van Wyck Brooks and Miss Katherine Anthony have undertaken, and with less scientific formality, Mr. Lytton Strachey, the challenge of this new method has been ignored, and especially by those commentators who are engaged in a study of the modern scene and in the contemporary expression of it. They have been absorbed in the shifting panorama of modern art, in a study of its broken rhythms, and have been content not to approach too closely any question of their meaning. The epic significance of these rhythms as the utterance of a time is still to be revealed.

It is disconcerting to see how rapidly certain critical attitudes have been outmoded by the measurements of realistic psychology. Only a few brief years ago, Mr. Spingarn was allowed to pass unquestioned when he declared "we have done with the race, the time, the environment of a poet's work as an element in criticism." But Mr. Spingarn's master, Benedetto Croce, is not so rash in his newly translated work on "Ariosto, Shakespeare and Corneille," when he says:

What is here of importance is the relation of these mental presuppositions with the life of the time, with the general culture of the period, with the historical phase through which the human spirit was then passing. In these respects, Shakespeare was truly, as he has appeared to those who have best understood him, a man of the Renaissance, of that age, which, with its navigation, its commerce, its philosophies, its religious strifes, its natural science, its poems, its pictures, its statues, its graceful architecture, had set earthly life in full relief. . . .

After this confession of faith, the critic is carried up to the very threshold of modern knowledge, declaring what is important in his research "does not concern the superficial, but the profound character of the man; it is not concerned with the congealed and solidified stratum, but with the tide that flows beneath it, which others would call the unconscious in relation to the conscious. . . ." But there the critic halts!

On the whole, Crocean criticism has devoted itself exclusively to judgment. As a measure of the creator's own progress at the time of creation it has consciously excluded all reference to what it has called the historical and scientific aspects of expression. Now comes a new doctor of aesthetics to point out how much of the artist's expression is made of dreams deeply imbedded in the scrap-heap of his experience—the odds and ends of all his life, his heredity and environment. By such philosophies, the oppressive duality of experience and expression has been destroyed and the two fused into one. The Crocean has always insisted that the artist's only preoccupation was to express his own vision of reality, ignoring the bits and pieces of which that vision might be compounded, and how much that reality might be affected by the curve of life. But to conceive thus of art merely as beauty—untrue and shambling word—is to conceive its function falsely, to depreciate its purpose for man, its relation to life, and its intended adequacy.

Criticism, concentrated upon expression, will always to some extent ignore man's desire to live, to preserve and maintain life in the midst of tides and to justify his effort against the ebb and flow of them. Yet as they shift, so does he change. He must go on for ever taking arms anew against new seas. It is this effort which modern art may be seen now to be making. Contemporary criticism has failed visibly to recognize it, or to disclose the connexion between events and expression.

Most of the critical outpouring of modernism has limited itself to an exposition and glorification of that plangent technical quality which distinguishes the new arts from the old. Their relation to the living organism of human life has been neglected, and brilliantly the arts hang in mid-heaven, catching the atmospheres of the world and shedding back upon earth their light, but altogether cut off so far as understanding and realization may be concerned.

Somehow the idea of inevitable change, of an evolutionary development in form, has become so well established in the minds of artists that they look upon new modes, new aspects of expression, as something originating necessarily and entirely within the art itself. In music, from Berlioz to Ravel, every developing relationship impinges so satisfactorily upon the one before it that the artist is unaware of any need for looking outside of his own medium for fundamental causes. The painter, the poet, the dramatist, and even the novelist have made almost a convention out of an extension of technical frontiers. This was to be expected; the last years of the nineteenth century established the law of change as a convention for artists of all kinds.

One fallacy is lost here in a greater. The artist's rebellion, which began in a general revolution against all restricting forms of life, continues to be in most cases merely in behalf of the freedom and expansive elasticity of his medium. He rarely goes so far behind what has become a stereotyped attitude to realize that art satisfies no need, has no justification, unless it is first of all human. As an abstraction, an activity by itself, it does not exist. Yet most creators are opposed to a metaphysical perception of their process. If they are aware, it is at best vaguely, that at bottom art is man's attempt to seize life, to understand life, and to make his own naked place in life less naked and less absurd. As it contributes to these ends, it is important. As an activity to be practised for its own mathematical properties—if such purity, for argument's sake, could be conceived—it is no more important than a game of dominoes. But if the artist shrinks from self-consciousness, the critic has no excuse for not seeing these relations clearly. Mr. J. Middleton Murry has described the critic's humanistic function with brevity: "His inquiries must be modulated, subject to an intimate, organic governance by an ideal of the good life."

The lack of adequate criticism to enlarge upon the essential vital relationships of modern art to the great body of human life, has exposed what puritans like to call "decadent" modern art to the danger of becoming actually decadent. Such formalisms, for instance, as the Aubrey Beardsley tradition still persist even to-day, although the romantic anarchism of the eighteen-nineties which bore them is only an archaic memory. There is an equal danger of having more recent techniques, stranger than those of three decades ago, lost in preoccupation with their own strangeness, unrecognized as a part of that vast unrestful dislocation of modern life which can alone justify them. Few artists try to understand, consciously that what they

call technique is only a diagram in expression of social thinking processes—in their minds and in the minds of their audience. To-day these processes are concentrated in a pressing human need to understand an expanding, complex civilization, its new formulæ and its mechanisms.

It would be vain, in the face of the last seven years, to pretend that man is at any time the cool, calm master of his environment. He lives in a world so large, so full of crossing purposes, in which his own tentative and intermittent effort at direction is so diffused, that accident, except for his own small increment of uncompleted purpose, rules him largely. He is seen again now, in a sudden consciousness of the developments of a hundred years, vainly and hastily attempting to create for himself new conceptions of human movement, to find deeper principles, to make rules and formulæ, which will endow him with power over the crowd-life which his machines have made for him.

How much to-day art—dissonant, with the simplicity of an extreme sophistication, characteristically mathematical in its expression—is an attempt to penetrate to that desired understanding, to illuminate the problems of an uncomfortably oppressive reality, it still remains for a profound criticism to show. The futilities and spiritual unrealizations of man's political career in modern times, the frustration of his yearnings for human solidarity, are all reflected deeply in the ironic scepticism, the almost impersonal sneer at the face of Heaven, which characterizes, and assuredly makes most significant, modern music, the modern drama and the novel. The dramatists, from Ibsen down to Schnitzler and Mr. Bernard Shaw read like a list of nay-sayers. The novelists, the Conrads, Hamsuns, Sudermanns, Tolstoys, Hardys, Bennetts, Thibauts, and at their best even such professional soothsayers as Mr. Wells and Mr. Galsworthy, view the spectacle sceptically and with compassion. The music of the new masters is a negation, an escape from reality into a numerical metaphysics. The science of discovering the mind of human beings *en masse*, of tracing the currents which ripple them, has assuredly no better field for experiment than that of modern art, in which the waves of feeling have scarcely had time to crystallize or set.

If it were possible to see mankind as a species, microcosmically, certainly there would be many times in history when the veil between himself and the barren face of his destiny would seem to wear thin. What remains always inexplicable in him, and what may be his only claim to divinity, is his struggle to throw out then against the cold silence new ways of discovering a meaning in life, adornments against the horror of his own inanity in the infinite scheme.

Jazz perhaps is now man's Dionysian protest, his attempt at forgetfulness, to lose himself in an ecstatic unconsciousness; in its broken rhythms and shattered tones he finds himself once more in an identity with a world that is cataclysmic and faithless.

RALPH BLOCK.

A WEST-COAST ELYSIUM.

PERSONS of cultivated tastes, and others who cultivate them in the winter leisure of genteel and fashionable Florida resorts—Palm Beach, Ormond, Winter Park or Belle Aire—sometimes casually and unconsciously measure their slight social eminence by slurring a certain West-coast Elysium named St. Petersburg. "A dreadful place, really. Full of middle-western farmers with chin-whiskers. They pitch quoits and chew tobacco and ex-

change life-histories on first acquaintance. You would find it very depressing there. We stopped at the place for a moment on the way to Pass-a-Grille." I have heard this sort of comment so often that it begins to ring with a note of challenge. These others had made a flying visit to this social purgatory and had returned uncontaminated by tobacco-juice and resolute friendliness. Why not I?

One day late in February, when the seclusion of a Polk County orange-grove was threatening me with claustrophobia, and the grievously low price of oranges was making a break in routine, I packed a hand-bag, threw it into the Ford and headed for St. Petersburg. By noon I was at the portals, hurrying down a long boulevard bisected by an interurban trolley-line. I passed an immense acreage of shacks and square and conical tents, palisaded by Dodges and Fords, traversed a banlieu of squat cottages of the Hollywood bungalow type, an area of stark, white boarding-houses, with narrow porches upstairs and down and shingles advertising "The Buckeye," "The Palmetto House," "Whispering Oaks," *et al.*, and then I plunged into the traffic and architectural commonplaces of the new, small American town.

Here, on the main thoroughfare, were the usual brick and stone fronts, the stereotyped window-displays of canned goods, haberdashery, cheap jewellery, women's frocks and underwear, the posted bargains of the chief real-estate booster, the first-class hotel—a splendid monument to banality in white brick and zinc—and finally the steel-pier and bathing-pavilion on the Ocean Boulevard. It was all a faithful reproduction of the lower middle-class seaside-resort of the north-east or south-west—of Asbury Park, New Jersey, or Long Beach, California—with nothing to hint at latitude or longitude but a few semi-tropical plants in a small park at the town's navel and the licence-tags of automobiles ranged about it.

But as I sauntered up and down the main street and under the palms of the little park I began to detect differences, to become aware of a flavour that was strong and unique. The stage-setting and costumes were the conventional ones of the lower middle-class American vacationist, but there was something about the temper of this crowd of farmers and small shopkeepers from Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky that seemed peculiar to the time and the place.

In all other places of this sort that I have visited there has been an air of sultry excitement. Pleasure is being snatched and drained bottoms-up in the shadow of an imminent blue Monday. The married men and women, young and old, sit on the mourner's bench in a state of heavy apathy that is a warning to irresponsible youth to go to the May-fly and be wise. But at St. Petersburg the auspices of Eros are not so strongly invoked as at Bear Mountain or Golden Gate Park. Here the holiday humour is one of genuine and well-earned leisure, of a Sunday afternoon in the Old World. There is evident none of the vivacity or geniality of a European holiday, of course—no wantonness and gaiety to atone for the bleakness of weekday and workaday existence in Industrial Civilization, but, if these people of the Middle West do not know how to play, at least they have learned how to rest. Verily, they are *en repos* in "St. Pete."

In the park they staidly enjoy an extremely "scientific" game of croquet called, I believe, "Roak." Great crowds surround the concrete courts where this sport goes on and mildly applaud when an especially good shot is made. Under a clump of cabbage-palmetto is a group of older men—most of them chin-whiskered and Congress-booted and chewing plug tobacco—intent on chess and checkers. Each pair of players is surrounded by a dozen or more onlookers as intent as themselves. In another corner of the park a brass band brays under a great cockle-shell of tongued and grooved pine. Quoits are being pitched here and there, and on either side of this Chautauquan grove a throng of men and women steadily flows down to the pier and the bathing-pavilion, some to fish for mullet with very long bamboo poles, others to engage in a natation that will waste no time displaying secondary sexual characteristics on the strand.

But the most interesting aspect of recreation in St. Petersburg is the reposeful gossiping of hundreds of men and women who sit contentedly for hours on the scores of green benches that are placed on the sidewalks of the main street at right angles to the curb. These people are making so much of happy inaction that one rubs one's eyes and looks hard for the little metal table and the Vermouth *cassis*, for the garish background of some Buvette Athanase or Grand Café de l'Univers.

On one of these benches a very blonde young man in a wasp-waisted Shepherd's Plaid is twirling his coarse straw hat on his knees as he makes overtures to a strikingly beautiful, dark-haired girl in a yellow batiste frock. Exteriorly there is nothing rustic about either of them. The wholesale clothing-merchants have arrayed them in as cheaply smart regalia as their brothers and sisters of Belmar or Redondo Beach. But there is a frank interchange between his candid blue eyes and the wide gaze of her splendid dark ones—no merely sensual appraisal here, neither is about to turn on the forced draught of holiday passion, one fancies.

Here and there are gatherings of middle-aged men and women, rather rosy and with much of the innocence of youth in their eyes, chatting and laughing as contentedly on their green benches as French peasants in a buvette on the Champ de Foire. The old farm-wives look worn and fragile and austere, but the middle-aged women have what are called "sweet faces"—girlish, kindly, unsophisticated. The old farmers, with their soft white beards and smooth upper lips are hale, wise and strong, and their eyes twinkle in true Yankee fashion as they gossip.

There is modest wealth enough here, one conjectures, to give the upper middle-class at least a run for its money in the country club, golf, tea and toddle kind of expenditure, but simple and intrinsically satisfying pleasure is enough for the frugal St. Petersburgers. I doubt if it ever enters his mind to strain after "social prestige" like the mercantile *arrivistes*, the genteel and the almost socially eminent who are trying so hard to have a good time in just the right way elsewhere in Florida. Here they do chew tobacco, as it was announced to me, and they have put a kimono on the Venus de Milo at the museum and they are intrusively friendly and somewhat blatant in *tête-à-tête*. They are vulgar, no doubt, but they have been wise enough not to enter the sweepstakes for material prestige. Soberly and contentedly, as few other Americans, they enjoy a complete rest from their hard struggle for a living with the forces of nature.

I went to St. Petersburg to scoff and remained to pray that, upon such a substantial foundation of Middle-western probity and common sense, President Harding—himself of this group and this region—may anchor his Administration. Industrial workers, business men, the professional classes, the headquarters-staff of high finance, may all be stricken with moral vertigo and *malaise*, as the centre of gravity of American society shifts. The whole crazy superstructure may creak and groan most alarmingly, but St. Petersburg and its peasant-proprietors of the Middle West are mortised and tenoned in granite. They laugh at what you call dissolution; they know the amplitude of time.

EDWARD TOWNSEND BOOTH.

WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY.

IV: THE WOMAN IN THE BAPTIST'S CASE.

IMMEDIATELY after his arrest John the Baptist was hurried to that majestic pile which, towering on the crags overlooking the Dead Sea, was known as the keep or castle of Machærus. This immense edifice was no Udolpho, no ruin, but a work of exquisite art. Herod could afford to run no risks with this prisoner but he determined to lodge him magnificently enough, and to allow him to communicate with his friends and followers. Herod, the man of fashion, the patron of art and literature, thought John a little crack-brained. Historians

dwell upon Herod's mania for building, but the Herod who put Machærus on those crags—or rather who finished it there—had that passion for architecture which is the highest manifestation of the artistic temperament in a ruler of men.

This particular Herod hated to lay hands on John. John had been guilty of what our Federal courts define as sedition, but never in his worst mood had Herod displayed the ferocity of the Federal judiciary of the United States in dealing with one who urged the soldiery—then actually campaigning—never to fight, to do violence to no man. The original word in the New Testament narrative could be accurately translated to mean an injunction by John to the soldiers to refrain from the slightest intimidation—a serious thing to say to the cohorts stationed round about Jerusalem. Herod—who must not be confused with the greater Herod who slaughtered the first-born—understood well enough why those crowds followed John. John preached what looked more or less like communism. He had also set up a reign of terror in the spiritual world based upon his prophecy of a wrath to come. It was inferred by the multitude that John was somehow engaged in an important task with reference to their rescue from this wrath, but there was a vague impression that Herod himself must be a hopeless case. As for Herod's wife—!

This woman had involved herself in a scandal that seemed serious even to the pagan world. Her career was really an anticipation of that of Catherine de Medici. The vicissitudes of the Herods in Jerusalem are oddly like those of the Medici in Florence. Their expulsions, their returns, their losses of power, their struggles to regain it, the distraction occasioned at Rome by the policy of aggrandizing them, their genius and their corruption—all these things tempt the imagination to infer that the Herods were reincarnate in the Medici. Both families were profoundly and strangely involved in the destinies of Christianity. Generation after generation, both manifested that tendency in their men to pass under the sway of their women which had such tragic consequences for John the Baptist. Herodias was every bit as subtle as Catherine de Medici. She had an even greater capacity for intrigue, for that form of passion which turns from love to hate and from hate again to love.

Herodias was in the dilemma of Francesca when that luckless lady of Rimini stood between two kinsmen. The parallel is so close that it is easy to see how much the theologian in John the Baptist prevailed over the poet. How different the attitude of Dante, listening to the plea of Francesca in that hell of his! Dante was hard, like John, inflexible, like John, and when stirred, stirred deeply, like John again. Encountering Francesca, Dante could, as Landor says, abandon his own very nature, converting all his strength into tenderness. "The great poet, like the original man of the Platonists, is double, possessing the further advantage of being able to drop one half at his option and to resume it." Thus the English critic. But John was no Dante and he could not read the woman's soul of Herodias as the Italian read the woman in the soul of Francesca. Herod, in the whole business, played the part of Paolo. There is a popular misapprehension regarding the ages of both Paolo and Francesca. Each was married to another and neither was, poetically speaking, young enough for their escapade—the very circumstance that made the affair of Herod and Herodias too damning for Jerusalem and John. Had the attitude of Dante in hell been that of John in Judæa, Francesca would have shrieked through the whole second circle of the Inferno for his head on a charger. But Dante was no true theologian and John was no true poet.

One may imagine Herodias striving, in her inevitable woman's way, to make her side of the case—the woman's side—intelligible to John. Mark, in his gospel, does not say how she did anything of that kind but it is clearly implied in his assertion that "Herodias had a quarrel against him and would have killed him but she could not." What was such a woman to effect with a man in a garment of camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins,

living on locusts and wild honey? His tone and temper must have been disconcerting to Herodias. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" The words may have rung in the ear of Herodias herself as she watched the crowds from the palace roof. She must have fled his presence with startled notions of herself as part of the chaff to be burned in that unquenchable fire. Jerusalem was ringing with his name as all Judæa went, confessing its sins, to be baptized in the Jordan.

What rendered the Baptist all the more remorseless, from her feminine point of view, was the fact that Herodias, in this whole affair, had acted with no thought of self. She might have intrigued with Rome in the manner of the Medici on behalf of a husband she preferred to abandon for Herod, but Senate and Caesar alike were distracted after experiments innumerable with the Jews. As for the Jews, they regarded the whole Herodian dynasty with disgust. The efforts of the several Herods to conciliate Pharisee and Sadducee involved them now with one and again with another of these factions. Herodias was herself by birth of the blood royal. Had she been ambitious for herself, how easily might she not have lifted Philip or some other kinsman to the pinnacle on which Herod Antipas was perched so giddily! Those clerical theologians who pronounce Herodias the evil genius of her dynasty display little of the poetical insight of Dante when he fell senseless from sheer sympathy at a tale so like her own. Herodias herself must have assailed the ear of John in language worthy, for all we know, of a place beside the confession of the lady of Rimini. Landor notes that in the midst of her punishment Francesca, when she comes to the tenderest and most appealing part of her story, tells it to Dante with complacency if not with thrills of joy. We may imagine Herodias baring her soul no less complacently to John the Baptist but the man in camel's hair did not swoon from sympathy—of that we may rest assured.

There was no more domestic peace for Herod while John baptized those multitudes. Until his fatal quarrel with this woman John was not, apparently, molested, at least by the Government. We Americans, living under a government of hostility to ideas, find it difficult to comprehend the paradox of the imperial Roman defence of ideas as such. The Cæsars and the Senate had taken their cue from Athens, where all spent their time, as we learn from the book of the Acts of the Apostles, in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. In Judæa, unfortunately, the hostility to ideas among the people was positively American. The Romans, with all their soldiers and all their tetrarchs and all their procurators, found it increasingly difficult to maintain freedom of speech there.

The Herods, eager to attain local popularity, hunted out any man with a new idea in politics or religion, and if they did not actually put him to death they scourged him. This brought the imperial Roman upon the scene in an effort—usually belated—to uphold freedom of conscience and of speech; an effort which inspired among the Judæan masses of those days precisely such fury as would be aroused in, say, Pittsburgh nowadays were President Harding to enforce there the constitutional right of the discontented peaceably to assemble and petition the government for a redress of grievances. Judæa in general had an attitude of hostility to ideas which while natural and intelligible to an American was mysterious and troublesome to a Roman or a Greek. The explanation is that bigotry and intolerance are not ancient and pagan but theological and modern.

Of the anomalies of this situation Herodias now took. It must be admitted, an unfair advantage. It was not so easy to work upon Herod otherwise. He was haunted, like all his dynasty, by a dread of losing the throne, but he had no distrust of John. Herodias seems to have represented John as an agitator with political designs upon the royal dignity. Josephus distinctly says the tetrarch thought John might head a rebellion. Perhaps

Herod was persuaded by his wife that John must inevitably fall into the hands of designing men in Rome and thus serve the ends of a conspiracy to undermine the Herodian dynasty itself. The Baptist was packed off to prison in the dead of night, apparently, and in his distant dungeon he heard of an even newer and greater prophet than himself, through whom the blind regained their sight, the lame walked and the dead were raised.

The hatred of Herodias remained as hot as ever. Herod still hesitated. He knew that Rome would ask awkward questions about John. There was the possibility that this man might have acquired the rights of Roman citizenship—an extremely serious consideration for Herod. It was Herodias herself who precipitated the catastrophe, for there can be little doubt that she suggested the fatal birthday-feast. It was enlivened with wine and song and dance in a style copied from Rome and indicated in the satires of Juvenal. Herod and Herodias were both thoroughly Romanized, for it was the fashion of the dynasty to educate its scions in the imperial capital. Herod must have indulged freely on this birthday of his. Salome was not a young girl when she danced for him, notwithstanding impressions conveyed by poets. She must have been in her thirties, and even the most romantic of all the poets who deny this have to concede that she was at least twenty-eight. Herodias, her mother, had learned the art of youth in the school to which Ninon de l'Enclos belonged. The period was one in which grandmothers got themselves up to look like sixteen and, unlike some contemporary grandmothers, succeeded in doing it. Salome had too evidently been coached in her part by her mother, and though Herod hated to hand her the head of John the Baptist on a charger he had given his word to a lady and he enacted his own part in the grim joke like a gentleman.

What, now, are we to think of Herodias? Since the question involves an attitude towards the Baptist himself, we may take our cue from him whose shoes John was not worthy to loose. Jesus, like John, had his Paolo and Francesca. A woman taken in adultery was brought before him. The scribes and the Pharisees who led her before the Master knew all about Herodias, and they remembered the courage in her case of the man sent from God whose name was John. Jesus, we know, did not forget him, but his handling of this case was not in the manner of John. When the woman taken in adultery heard the Master say at last: "Neither do I condemn thee—go and sin no more!" we may surmise that she, too, could have told a tale like Francesca's. It had not occurred to John to invite those who were without guilt to cast the first stone at Herodias. No wonder he did not raise the dead!

Herod thought for a time that John had come back from that grave into which his disciples had put him; but Herodias, we may be sure, knew better. What might not have been her destiny, and Herod's too, had it occurred to John to say to his audiences: "He that is without guilt among you, let him first cast a stone at her!" The difference between John the Baptist and Jesus is exemplified in the difference between Herodias and Mary of Magdala. The seven devils cast out of Mary can have been no worse than the seven devils put into Herodias. John's difficulty was that he did not know the heart of woman.

ALEXANDER HARVEY.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

A BRITISH HALL OF FAME.

SIRS: I admit I was a bit rebellious as I stood in the entrance to the National Portrait Gallery in St. Martin's Place, just off Trafalgar Square. To live in London is one thing, and a heavenly thing, but to *do* London, is quite another. Why should I, I said to myself, why should I, a lively fellow, a man of pith and bottom, spend any of my leisure in surveying an "official" collection of British portraits?

Certainly I was in no mood to go in; but outside was a conventional London fog, yellow, palpable, distressing to the lungs and painful to the eyes. If I could escape that fog for an hour, it might lift and permit me to resume the normal life of an American in London, with its cheerful goings to and fro, its loafings and its sudden bursts of energy. I might feel like a visiting American schoolteacher indoors, but obviously I should feel like a prisoner out. I walked on into the gallery.

The first thing that struck me was the discovery that the pictures were not "art"! Not primarily. They were historical portraits and busts, selected by historians and not by a jury of guilty academicians. They met you frankly, it seemed to me, and begged you to leave outside all æsthetic jesuitry and the skullduggery of the schools. This amused me and I decided to meet them half way. I bought a catalogue and, turning down the first gallery to the left, ran plumb into a picture of Tom Paine!

To an American in London that encounter was most astonishing. In my own country, I reflected, Thomas Paine is intimately and honourably and indeed magnificently connected with our Revolutionary period, but the only public reference to him by an American public man in recent years that I could think of, was that of the late President Roosevelt who called him a "filthy little atheist." Of course Paine was not an atheist, filthy or otherwise; he was a deist, but Mr. Roosevelt had the politician's instinct in these matters. He knew the American public, he knew the unrelenting hostility of the politicians and churchmen to Paine's memory. As I looked at the portrait, slowly browning with varnish and time, I tried to conceive of the clamour which would arise in the United States if an attempt were made to place Paine's picture in a national collection of this sort. That mental effort drove into my mind the thin wedge of a new idea, the realization that the Englishman's feeling for the past is at once more genial and tolerant, and more respectful, than our own. If a man has been burly enough to impinge on his own generation, that fact alone makes him thoroughly significant to the English mind—and how the walls bore testimony to that fact!

Indeed, the whole gallery seemed full of middle-class rebels. There was Horne Tooke, who helped John Wilkes establish the right of Middlesex to send to Parliament anybody it pleased, even Wilkes. There was Wilkes himself, a middle-class politician who fought almost viciously for the right of the people to send anyone they pleased to Parliament—a right, be it noted, which the people of the United States have never secured for themselves. Nearby was William Hone, the radical politician and satirist. There was Robert Owen, the Utopian socialist. In the same gallery were John Bright and Richard Cobden, together with Charles Stewart Parnell and John Philpot Curran who would, I suppose, be Sinn Feiners if they were living to-day. Among the theologians, I encountered Bishop Colenso who seems to have been forgiven for having bedevilled the Pentateuch. There was Chaplain William Dodd who, as I learned from the catalogue, forged a bond against the Earl of Chesterfield and was promptly executed for his lapse, and, speaking of the erring Dodd, I noticed that the hospitable walls had room for the strenuous Colonel Blood, known chiefly, as I gathered, for his unsuccessful attempt to steal the Crown jewels from the Tower of London.

In short, I could not help feeling, as I strolled along, that the collection had proved a bit of a joke on the solemn earl who, projecting the scheme for a National Portrait Gallery in the House of Lords in 1856, had laid down narrow lines for it:

Earl Stanhope attached the greatest importance to the authoritative power of refusal and believed the whole success of the undertaking would depend upon the proper exercise of that power. . . . The success of the whole scheme depended on confining the Gallery to men of real distinction, of real fame.

That is all very pretty, but time has shown how lamentably the Earl failed to reckon with the deep instincts of an historical race!

Joshua Reynolds's portrait of Edmund Burke revealed a choleric man, rather narrow, I thought, and perpendicular in his views. It reminded me of some one's comment about Burke, that "he rarely showed his powers unless he was in a passion." I wondered whether, on rereading some of his things in the light of that portrait, they would begin to sound like diatribes; it struck me that they might. On the other hand, Hickel's portrait of Charles James Fox was quite different in feeling; you saw a fine pot-bellied idealist whom it would be quite easy to "believe in," as we say in the United States!

Among the men of letters were several surprises for an American. Obviously I have been negligent in these matters or the picture of Charles Lamb "painted after Henry Meyer" would not have astonished me so. It was the picture, right enough, of a clerk in the East India Company office, but it was not my easy-going, Middle-Western conception of the genial essayist of that generation. He looked, I thought, like one of his own "poor relations," an anæmic, ascetic soul who might write about roast pig but who rarely enjoyed it. Another surprise was to find the joyous William Blake actually joyous. I don't know why one should be astonished to find a ruddy English youth instead of a hollow-eyed Christian, but it goes to show how gratuitous and "literary" and inaccurate are the mental images with which we make shift for years. I went back to that picture of Blake several times just to feel his muscle, so to speak. It impressed me as having quite a bit to do with his "Songs of Innocence and Experience"! In the same room was my third surprise, the discovery that Henry James was an American to the last. Mr. Sargent's portrait of him seemed to me to leap from the frame; you could "spot" the trans-Atlantic character of it clear across the room. In the "States"—to use the engaging colloquialism prevalent over here—we have assumed for years that James had long been subdued like the dyer's hand, and it was startling to find that he had not. I wondered if his Americanism had not, after all, tried the English somewhat up to the very last; I felt half scandalized!

Some of the types, a very few, seemed to me soft and flabby—reflections of the "cushy" way they had been permitted to live. Of course we have the same phenomenon in the United States, members of the third and fourth generation who are born to comfort and power and never know the toughening of struggle and defeat. Addison's remark in the *Spectator* occurs to one, that "it is the great advantage of a trading nation, that there are few in it so dull and heavy that they may not be placed in stations of fortune." We have some in America; they have some here.

On the whole, after one leaves the Tudor rooms, the most interesting faces, taken as a group, seemed to me to be those in the legal profession. Personally I have no great relish for the law but just the same those pictures impressed me. I had to admit that they were keen, implacable fellows even though I groaned at the thought of all the solemnity and pretentiousness and redundancy and general intellectual silliness which they have contributed to the world. However, I suppose the strength and interest in these faces is explicable enough, for in the most litigious country in the world these men have enjoyed comfort but never effortless ease.

What a fine time I had had! When I left the building the fog had lifted and Trafalgar Square was no longer a death trap for the alien. I strolled along, relaxed and ready for anything to turn up. What an extraordinary panorama these portraits represented! Every kind of romantic effort, every sort of hare-brained enterprise, was registered in that gallery. One madness piled on another, in some of those rooms, and yet they call the English a stolid race!

And the record, how conscientious and complete. I recalled a phrase in Coleridge's "Table Talk" which I had been lazily reading, a phrase which struck me curi-

ously, where he complains of the Turks as "an unhistorical race." That phrase falls oddly on American ears. History? After all, one argues, what the devil is History? If your Turk prefers to contemplate the future or the present, rather than the past, his choice can easily be sustained. What a curious place at which to attack an alien civilization!

Then I began to see that the American attitude towards history is at present almost as casual as the Turk's. The average American knows something of England's ancient record; he has heard of Stonehenge and Roman roads, of Saxon ruins and Norman abbeys. He has heard of the Tudors and the Stuarts and the Hanoverian succession. When he thinks of English history, he adds these items together in a neat arithmetical sequence. But that these things themselves, the living in juxtaposition to them, have done anything to the English people, have made them profoundly different from the Turks (and even different from the Americans!) does not readily occur to him. It takes him a long time to realize what Clio means to the Englishman; the only one of the Muses, it seems to me, for whom an Englishman will cheerfully waive his comfort, his convenience, his income and even—as I discovered that afternoon—his sense of what is respectable and right! I am, etc.,

London, England.

CHARLES THOMAS HALLINAN.

MISCELLANY.

THE happy few whose good fortune it was before the war to do some research work among the treasures of Oxford's great and venerable Bodleian Library will share regrets with me on learning that the redoubtable Falconer Madan, who contributed so much to the atmosphere of that world-famous shrine, is now Emeritus Librarian and no longer the actively presiding genius of the place. I remember how in the days of his consulship one used to be challenged at the foot of the winding stone stair and compelled to relinquish not only one's cigar or pipe but also one's matches; then at the top one's credentials were carefully inspected by some forbidding young attendant, and finally one was admitted to the cold and awful sanctuary. No heating and no artificial lighting were permitted, because of the danger of fire. Alcoves with small mullioned windows and old oak tables turned back the clock three centuries. Here one could consult the priceless original manuscripts and *rarissima* which are necessarily beyond the reach of all American libraries and collectors for the very good reason that the supply was practically exhausted before we were in any condition to recognize and take advantage of its existence.

THE very choicest rarities, however, such as only known exemplars or only perfect copies, could not be seen without the Librarian's personal permission; and well I remember the reluctance of the young attendants (so few of whom have survived the holocaust in France) to carry up a request to Mr. Madan. At length, with fear and trembling, they would venture into the lion's den, while the terrified petitioner lingered outside with bated breath. Low mutterings could be heard at first, soon growls, then roars and "deep carnivorous thunderings in the throat," till finally the great man himself would come storming forth to see who in the world dared disturb his solitude to ask for such an astounding privilege. Woe unto him whose nerve was weak, or presence of mind lacking, or credentials at fault! Verily in that hour he was searched as with a flame, and if found wanting was never again admitted within the pale; but if he survived the fiery ordeal he might even be allowed to enter the innermost Holy of holies and there find Mr. Madan the cultivated and delightful gentleman, the wise and generous helper, that he truly was. All this ritual of hostility, one realized afterwards, was only part of a settled policy to preserve these perishable treasures for posterity by discouraging from handling them all but the true and faithful students of the word.

MR. MADAN's illuminating and authoritative monograph, entitled "Books in Manuscript: a Short Introduction to Their Study and Use," first appeared nearly thirty years ago and needs no new recommendation to "that fortunate minority of literary workers" addressed in its preface, but it may well be called to the attention of a wider public than that originally contemplated by its modest author. One need not be a collector or special student of manuscripts to be interested in the origins of alphabets and paper and books, in the peculiarities of the unknown scribes who have transmitted to us the priceless records and glories of our racial heritage, in famous libraries and manuscripts, in literary forgeries, and in other similarly fascinating topics, especially when the treatment is humane and stimulating rather than strictly technical. In short, the uninitiated layman will, I am sure, find as much enjoyment in Mr. Madan's book as the more advanced bibliophile will find instruction.

THE alterations and additions in the recently-published second edition, "revised and corrected" are well worth noticing. The book is of course brought up to date by the inclusion of the latest discoveries or theories in its field, such as Sir Arthur Evans's challenging of the accepted history of the alphabet, Professor A. C. Clark's contention about the errors of scribes, and the localization of MSS. on the strength of minute tricks of style. Some few specific corrections are made, such as the reduction of the earliest Egyptian inscription from 4000 to 3000 B. C., the better translation of *tabula*, and the sad insertion of one questioning word in the thrilling story of the oldest known MS. of the New Testament, which was in 1859 "deposited at Petrograd, where it *perhaps* now lies." The additions vary from a helpful reference or a sentence supplying some bit of incidental information—such as "There are still some old libraries in which all or some of the MSS. are chained, as at Hereford Cathedral," or "Perhaps the finest collection of these jewelled bindings in England is in the John Rylands Library at Manchester"—up to a whole new paragraph on "Papyri from Egypt," or three new and amusing pages on "Curiosities of Palæography." But, to my mind, by far the pleasantest feature of the revision is the more gracious tone of the author's riper learning, for the veteran scholar is more modest and less dogmatic than was the youthful specialist a quarter of a century ago. The first edition is long since out of print; this mellowed and richer version is therefore doubly welcome.

THE other day I noticed in the picture-section of the newspaper a photograph showing the installation in the Musée des Invalides of the "historical railway-car in which the German delegates signed the terms of the armistice." When one remembers what hallowed memories this railway-car enshrines one is tempted to wonder whether rationalism—that suave and yet mordant rationalism which seemed to grow especially well in the soil of the Seine basin—has survived the war. Would not Rabelais or Voltaire have mocked that railway-car out of existence: would they not have made this grotesque memento a jest and a byword for ever? When one contemplates all the pious mummeries, the fictitious bones of saints and bits of the true cross, that Paris rationalism has incinerated, it seems a little strange that superstitions which cling to the iron cross of warfare should flourish so easily.

IF Paris be still in existence a century hence—and at the rate the French Government is furthering the processes of peace one is inclined to stress the subjunctive mood—it would be great fun to visit the city and see what had happened to this holy relic. My own guess is that the armistice of 1918 will be about as faint in the memory of most Parisians of 2021 as the treaty of Ghent is to-day. As like as not the car will then be housed in the museum of comparative technology, as an example of the cumbersome, unimaginatively designed contraptions which characterized the early part of the twentieth century. For

my part I find it rather hopeful to note that a great many of our intentional souvenirs to posterity—a great many of the conscious attempts to catch the eye of "the future historian"—become merely ridiculous with age; their pretensions become automatically deflated. Where are the throngs of pious disciples that Jeremy Bentham thought would come to visit his mummy? We may take care to write our own epitaph indeed but it remains for posterity to say whether they will visit the tomb.

Is it not on the whole a good thing that the will-to-perpetuation spends itself so largely in cemeteries? Otherwise the whole world might be the museum that the cities of Rome and Athens to-day still so largely are. Perhaps we have never given vandalism and historical impiety their due. Samuel Butler, it is true, once said that the art of "covery" was quite as important as the art of discovery: but the historian, the archæologist, the stone-cutter, the foundation-layer, the librarian, and the writer of personal memoirs are in a conspiracy to make "covery" impossible. I for one have never had any strong sentiments of reproach against those Gothic citizens who quarried the old Roman buildings to get lime for their own houses and public edifices. What is worth preserving from the past is largely an immaterial possession, and as long as the best spirit of Rome was carried over, as was to no small degree the case in Mediterranean lands, not much was lost in the dilapidation of temples, theatres, and baths. Once the spirit has departed the shell is doomed; and while the spirit remains a hundred shells may be destroyed and a hundred new ones would speedily replace them.

JOURNEYMAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

"FELLOWSHIP IS LIFE."

SIRS: Throughout this city of New York, as, I have no doubt, in other cities, there are thousands of modest, withdrawing young people, who hump their shoulders over books of art, letters, and philosophy, but know no fellowship to which they can bring their thoughts and presences. After a stimulating perusal of a book, or after a period of reflection when their need for company is keenest, their efforts for sociability invariably meet with ridicule or rebuff. All the companionship in the world is theirs if they can stay with little thought and much tongue-waggery, but they can not do so. Sometimes they drift into literary clubs, but literary clubs are mostly dull and narrow. What is best for these hungry young men and women outcasts is a free, small group, variously interested in life, and mutually delightful and helpful, and all without the officialness of the usual club.

For the most part, wherever there are groups, they are usually centred around one idea, one person, or one publication. Can not some broad, free sociable groups be formed to which these lonely students of life can look with hopeful eyes? All they long for is a companionship of the better kind, in which friends may vary in type, and the relations interest and stimulate.

Without this, these fresh, enthusiastic hearts and minds turn in upon themselves, broodingly. You meet them wherever you go, and see it in their eyes. They look out at you from narrow windows, or from the further corners of the lecture-room. In time many of them grow too hard, and many grow too soft. More become successful in business, while others evolve into worn housewives. And all are broken and warped, each in his own way groping in the dark; all of them units in our Winesburg, Ohio. I am, etc.,
New York City.

I. GOODMAN.

THE LONDONER AND HIS POSTERS.

SIRS: Journeyman is dead right in what he says in his Miscellaneous column in your issue of 25 May about those gorgeous posters that delight all beholders in the innumerable stations of London's Underground railway. During my recent sojourn in Cockaigne I, too, discovered that England has at least one advertising genius who has little, if anything, to learn from American methods. I do not know his name, but he is said to be the traffic-manager of the combined Underground railway- and bus-companies. In the morning,

they say, he attacks traffic-problems—how to handle ten billion people or so—and in the afternoon he designs the most seductive posters and maps that I have ever seen.

Poster-design in America—thanks chiefly to the Teutonic influences which have crept in through a certain well-known New York designer—is still pretty much dedicated to the “smashing contrast,” the “punch” in flat colours. But a poster—as this clever Englishman has discovered—can do a lot more things besides hit you between the eyes. He is getting into his posters that curious appeal which personality always makes when you are allowed to get a glimpse of it and almost every Londoner admits that his things are irresistible. London, as everybody knows, is a vast congeries of towns and boroughs, some of them with delightful rural touches. This man has hunted them up and displayed them, in strong but pleasant colours, on posters that greet you everywhere—and his maps—well, they not only solve greater London for you in a week, but they seduce you for ever.

The odd part of it—I won't say the English part of it—is that *Punch* attacks this genius every week or so, apparently to the great delight of its constituency! “If you didn't spend so much money on posters,” says *Punch*, “you might carry us from Charing Cross to King's Cross cheaper than you do,” or words to that effect. When, unable to restrain your cupidity for these posters which so unexpectedly reveal personality, intelligence and even humour tucked away in a huge corporation, you visit the headquarters of the Underground to beg, buy or steal a set of them, the young woman at the counter remarks, as she sells them to you for a shilling apiece: “Strange, there is a regular stream of Americans coming in here to buy these posters.” And you say: “What? Don't the English ever buy them?” “Hardly ever,” she replies. I once put this problem up to the art-director of one of the public schools. “My dear man,” he said, “it would never occur to an Englishman that he *could* buy these posters. He would assume, a priori, that it wasn't done.”

All this reminds me—if you will allow me thus to ramble along the pleasant bypaths which your friendly Journeyman has opened up—all this reminds me somehow of an amusing story which Mr. Joseph Pennell tells somewhere. Fifteen years or so ago, when he was working in London, a furious campaign developed over the election of members on the London County Council. The *London Daily Chronicle*—with Mr. Henry W. Massingham, now of the *London Nation*, as its literary editor—was very sympathetic towards the Fabian programme. Mr. Massingham went to Mr. Pennell and asked the latter to secure all the big artists he could for a special pictorial campaign-number on behalf of the Fabian candidate. It was the first time such a thing had been done in England. Mr. Pennell, delighted with the chance, rounded up Whistler, William Morris, Walter Crane, Aubrey Beardsley, Phil May, Burne-Jones and half a dozen others, and they worked like beavers, turning out pictures designed to usher in the new Fabian commonwealth. “Twenty-four pictures went into the *Daily Chronicle*,” says Mr. Pennell mournfully, “and twenty-five seats were lost by the reform-crowd, and lots of people blamed it on the art.” I am, etc.,

H. T. C.

THE OUTLOOK IN GERMANY.

SIRS: During the last few months more than at any time since 1914, the German people have become united in a determination to exhaust every possibility of self-help that is left to our country under the threatening conditions of the Versailles treaty. The whole nation is trying to develop not only its economic life but all its activities in support of its new forms of civic freedom, hoping thereby to carry on with renewed energy the finest traditions of Goethe, Fichte, Jahn and their times. People's Universities, Schools for the Gifted, Debating Societies, etc., indicate by their rapidly increasing number the desire to free our national life from its predominantly economic colour. The “victory without peace” is, however, forcing a change. The attitude of our former (and unfortunately present) enemies is eliminating from our minds every other consideration but that of our economic survival.

The destruction of German trade in Entente countries has been demanded from the beginning by Allied “bitter-enders.” The trade-war now threatens to be carried even beyond the programme outlined in 1915 and 1916, as it seems already to have brought with it an attempt to boycott German trade with non-Entente countries. The feeling is spreading throughout Germany that England has been and still is the driving power behind practically every economic measure launched against us, the unfortunate but understandable ire of the French being merely used as a convenient cover to prevent the premature dis-

covery of the real plans. These plans appear to many of us to be the following—and their scope and significance amply justify their discussion at this time, for they are bound, if put into practice, to affect not only indirectly but directly the economic structure of the whole world.

During the greater part of the nineteenth century England, as the world's foremost manufacturing country, was forced to draw on all available sources for its raw materials, and it was of course the consistent champion of free trade. Economic and political conditions have made for a decided change in this attitude, especially since the beginning of the present century. Mr. Chamberlain's protective campaign and Mr. Balfour's nicely balanced speeches about insular free trade clearly established the trend towards protection some fifteen years ago. Economically, British manufacturers, so it was said, must be protected against the growing competition of America and Germany, while at the same time the supply of raw materials must be safeguarded. Politically, this pressing problem was to be solved by identifying the colonies more closely with the motherland, thus furthering the imperial idea by taking care of British economic needs.

The group of statesmen who now rule in Britain have never lost sight of their goal. Canada's and India's imperial preferential tariffs before the war were only a small beginning. The elimination by means of war of Britain's most pressing competitor, Germany, was also only a step. So far the policy of peace-time “trade-sanctions” recently decided upon in London is the boldest advance towards that goal, which is to call a halt not only on German trade but on all non-British trade. Plans are now under consideration and in execution for the carrying out of up-to-date methods of trade-protection and trade-interference. Governmental control of trade through the issuing of licences or through evidence about the source of origin is far more effective than control through tariff-laws for the reason that the first method is far more difficult to overcome or to counteract. The issuing of licences permits delay when non-British trade is involved, and the obtaining of evidence about sources of origin permits temporary detention on the mere ground of suspicion in practically every case where European countries are concerned. Thus the natural advantages under which British colonies already carry on their trade with the motherland—owing to the higher purchasing-value of its money as compared with that of most countries on the Continent—are bound to be accentuated. This state of affairs will make it easier to persuade the colonies to allow the British Empire to be organized into a sort of Custom Union. An economic body would then be created which might in time fully absorb its own raw materials.

In Germany we shall probably have to trust more fully than ever to individual initiative if we are to be saved from the threatened destruction of our industries. Our answer to the London “sanctions” will probably be the removal of all trade-restrictions, and the establishment of free trade with the world as far as our country is concerned.

Self-reliance, that sense of individual responsibility which is so familiar in the United States is something our young people are striving for more than ever. This state of mind is due largely to the greater civic freedom which our new Constitution has granted us. Councils have been instituted in every form of activity, even in the universities. For instance, the membership in the *Deutsche Studentenschaft* (German student-body) has become obligatory at all German universities, a small percentage of the enrollment-fees being deducted by the authorities for every student and turned over to the Council. The student then has a right to participate in the general council of the students of the university and to cast his vote for the local student-representatives (about one for every 500) who in turn elect first a local board and then through delegates a national executive board. These elections take place yearly and are now bringing to the front, when about 130,000 students are voting, a group of some 200 of the most popular and energetic young men who are destined to be among the coming intellectual leaders of our country. These boards, the national in conjunction with the local, have lately organized a *Wirtschaftshilfe* (economic help), which is conducted by the students themselves in every one of the twenty-three German universities, for the purpose of assisting the great number of students who have not sufficient funds under the present difficult conditions to carry on their studies. This help takes the form of bringing such students into touch with opportunities for extra work and of giving them a chance of purchasing provisions, meals and necessities of all kinds at the lowest possible prices. Thus an admirable form of self-help, which is common in American colleges, has been brought into our university life. I am, etc.,

Berlin, Germany.

A. B. C.

BOOKS.

THE BOHEMIA OF THE HEART.

ONCE there was a little boy who lived in a street lined on each side by houses of a dazzling whiteness with green shutters, a street permeated with an odour of dust, coffee, turpentine, all the mingled exhalations of an Eastern port, where, at the far end, a glint of foam and cornflower denoted the ineffable presence of a sword-bright sea. It was one of those outposts of eternity which the genius of a Conrad has invested with a nostalgic charm, and which are, in reality, so banal and so melancholy with their heat, their solitude and their ennui of endless afternoon where there is nothing to look at and nothing to do. The child had a French nurse, a product of the rue de Loupe, who had followed her convict-lover to the colony, and this woman would regale him in his earliest infancy with the sinister romances of the Petit Balcon or the Caveau, Boulevard Barbés, or else her flat voice took on a more lurid colouring as she recounted, with an appalling complacency, the rebellion of the blacks and the murder of the governor, his household and his children in the cellars of the palace.

"And were they all eaten up?" demanded the young boy.

"All, Monsieur Francis."

"Continue, Maria."

From the beginning, the child was a wanderer, an incorrigible *voyou*, only, unfortunately, the penal colony of Noumea was very limited in area and scope. He loved best the strange and tragic interval "between the dog and the wolf," between schooltime and supper, when the palm-trees stood up rigid as scimitars against the infinite violet mirage of sky and water, slowly peopling with an armada of silver lights. He would return, his hands plastered with the mud of the swamp, his eyes brilliant and senses intoxicated with an hour's freedom of the bush.

"Where have you been?" demanded his father from the head of the family board.

He hung his head. One of his brothers whistled ironically over his soup: *Nous n'irons plus au bois*.

Then his mother interposed:

"You will speak later. Eat and drink now. And say nothing."

II

It was in a bookshop on the Seine's left bank that I first heard æsthetic judgment pronounced once and for all upon Francis Carco. The shop itself might be worthy of special study were life not so short. It was low; it was long and dim, filled in on three sides with examples of contemporary literature. White narcissi bloomed perpetually on the desk of the proprietess, and a portrait of the latter done in violent oils was exposed like an icon at the far end. Nearer the door were hung representations of Paul Claudel, André Gide, Oscar Wilde and Ralph Waldo Emerson, and with the exception of the last two, who have passed beyond these voices, the originals of the photographs could sometimes be seen in the shop. Two men of talent occasionally came there, Duhamel and Jules Romains. Valéry Larbaud, with his air of a stout schoolboy, gorged with plum-cake and English poetry, leaned against the shelf, regarding with heavy eyes the delicious little girl who wrapped up the books, and the angular head and gleaming eyeglasses of the author of "Ulysses" accompanied by his son who was nearly as tall as himself, could be dimly discerned in the middle distance.

As for the priestess of this mignon temple of "modern forms," I will not soon forget the friendly, helpful, educational reproach (for we needs must live the highest when we see it) with which she responded when I innocently inquired what she had of Francis Carco.

"Ah monsieur," said she, "You must not waste your time upon such things. It is the literature of the police station, of the cinema, is it not so? Now our dear Gide... ah, what a subtle intelligence, what a beautiful mind...!"

At that moment the object of this eulogy entered, and abandoning me to the literature of the cinema, she turned to communicate with his beautiful mind.

All that could be known of Carco at that time was that he had fought in the war, that he had collaborated in a play "Mon Homme," which had been running some six months, and has only just closed, that an adaptation of his novel, "Jésus la Caille" had been forbidden on the ground that its subject rendered it unfit for ears accustomed to the chaste complications of "Les Pervertis" and "Je Veux Coucher avec Nini," and that he inhabited the Quai du Louvre, where he worked hard and lived on his successes in a manner extraordinarily retired. Altogether he has written about half-a-dozen novels of very unequal merit, and to these novels the adjective "modern" is often applied, an adjective which may appear indecisive, but which has, in this case, a certain significance. For just as the argot which composes so large a part of Carco's pages would have been as unintelligible five years back as the language of the primitive Gaul, so his books can with difficulty be appreciated except against the background of Paris during the great Carthaginian peace in which we live, this anarchic and irresponsible period, when the god-like Georges floored Beckett in less than one round under the patronage of Mr. Bernard Shaw, and every third evening the following notice can be read in the journals: "During the past week 160 individuals of both sexes have been arrested for vagabondage and prostitution and sent to the Dépôt."

The novels of Carco deal precisely with this kind of individual, with a world which, up to this time, has, unfortunately, been employed more for purposes of melodrama and moralizing than for the powerful uses which it presents to art, or for the indubitable charm which it may exercise on certain temperaments. The so-called "crook play" in vogue in America is a good example of its uses, since it is melodramatic and moralizing at the same time. Carco is one of the few novelists who have utilized the groundwork of melodrama, and upon it has produced powerful implications of terror and compassion. After all, the old reproach has largely lost its point if indeed it ever had one. Things occur in the pages of Carco no less and no more "melodramatic" than they occur in newspapers or in reality. The hero of "L'Equipe" is a house-breaker, the man in "Bob et Bobette" is a cadet, the principal character of "Jésus la Caille" belongs to the oldest profession in the world. Whether such people are intrinsically more interesting than Owen Asher or Linda Condon is beside the point of our study; their creator evidently finds them so, and there would be found many to agree with him. . . .

This brings us to the notable quality in Carco; his attitude toward his creations. Mr. Ford Maddox Hueffer, in his literary reminiscences recently published in the *Dial*, observes correctly that the life of violent adventures and criminal loves is not in the least our own life, that is, the life of one who likes his reading

¹"Jésus la Caille." "Bob et Bobette s'amusent." Francis Carco. Paris: *Mercurie de France*.

to be as polite as his friends. Perhaps that is why the treatment of the underworld on the part of novelists, particularly Anglo-Saxon ones, is usually so distant, so singularly infelicitous. When it is not the failure in realism which impresses us, it is the moral failure, the failure to comprehend. The late Charles-Louis Philippe, for instance, was an admirable writer, and his novel, "Bubu de Montparnasse," dealing with much the same sort of world as those of Carco's, was, like the latter, innocent of any particular preoccupation with the problem of form, but it also lacked that other and startling innocence, that total absence of moral superiority, which is so striking in our author. The attitude of Philippe toward his *souteneurs* and syphilitics was a little like one of his own characters; "*il fait trop de discours.*"

One of the latest, and it must be said, one of the most insupportable of the literary slum-explorers, Michael Fane (or, if you prefer, his creator, Mr. Compton Mackenzie), represents the climax of this curious superiority. He too discourses, and to a simply stupefying degree. There is in "Sinister Street," if we remember, a great deal about "the standards of the underworld," and "the necessity for God," and much other philosophizing in the tone of a pious undergraduate or a ritualist curate commencing his apprenticeship in a slum-parish. But in the five or six novels of Francis Carco, books which are entirely of narration, and three-fourths of dialogue, a dialogue unknown to dictionaries and to æsthetic literature, the argot of the young sons and daughters of Paris in 1920, the primary language of the pavement, the *bistro* and the bedroom hired for the night, there are not to be found a dozen words indicating any personal bias, any moral or sentimental preoccupation on the part of the novelist. For to write with vision and truth about the denizens of the underworld, it is not enough to have loved them; it is necessary to have been one of them.

Whether novels so incisively and bitterly of the moment are literature, whether they are "important," as the phrase goes, is not in one's province to decide, but their author is, at any rate, like Villon, a curious example of the literary character, of one who has chosen his milieu, not through any journalistic coquetry with low society and "the dangerous life," but through an instinct much more subtle and hidden, an instinct like hunger or love. One thinks of this artist, on the autumnal evenings when domes and houses advance from the mystery of twilight as if designed immaterially out of dusk and music, leaving unremarked the little poets and æstheticians discoursing of fine shades and new forms, just as he had left the lamp-lit domesticity of his family to wander in the tragic gloamings of Noumea. He would cross the Seine, with its coloured garland of bridges, and take the Boulevard de Sebastopol, the immemorial highroad of pleasure, where the shadows of women pass behind the yellow curtains, and in the end all the daughters of music are brought low. There is a fervent sensuality in the blue air, in the sweetness of the twilight. The thin lines of trees in the centre of the boulevard, and the tall ugliness of houses to right and left, dissolve like smoke in the vaporous evening, where an old moon hovers like a golden sail. There is an odour in the street which takes one by the throat, the odour of chestnuts roasting, and burning leaves, of violets and carnations along the pavements, of alcohol before the bars. Behind the windows of each *bistro*, empearled with raindrops, the hard profiles of comrades can be divined, and the pale pretty faces of the girls. All the vague inquietude of the great town seems to lift itself,

and cries to the stars. Often the wan and hardy beauty of Fernande passes like a ghost, and the charming and equivocal body of La Caille defines itself in the obscurity of trees or in the shadow of the *vespasien*.

Should he return to his sleeping quarter and the safe life, the time is not past when the voices of old friends, old prejudice and old illusions may demand: Where have you been? Should he reply: From Montmartre . . . from the bar where all sorts of vagabonds stand taking their pleasure . . . from the waste places where I have gathered the flower of this poor love which fills and destroys my heart . . . from the street which has taken me and will keep me always! It is better to be still, and to whisper as one would to the demon of genius which sleeps in the depths of the being: You will speak later. Eat and drink now, and say nothing.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

A DISEASE AND ITS SYMPTOMS.

BIT by bit the housing-problem is being dragged out into the light of day. The latest of several recent books which have exposed the folly of trying to deal with the problem in terms of houses only is "The Housing Famine,"¹ but this latest volume is of quite a new and different type. The writers, three well-known students of the subject, engage in a debate under conditions which strictly limit them to the number of words to be used. The average reader, however, is likely to find some difficulty in following their very much condensed arguments, for they are not sequentially presented in the form of question and answer, but rather as a lawyer would present evidence and rebuttal. Nevertheless, the whole range of the housing-problem is pretty well covered. Mr. Ackerman heroically exposes its baffling economic ramifications, and shows the futility of trying to apply the usual remedies. He traverses our whole industrial system, illustrates its failure to function in housing by its failure to work in any direction, except as it can dictate its terms of price and profit. Mr. Murphy, though finally admitting his sympathy with Mr. Ackerman's contention that there is no solution to the housing-problem under our present industrial system, stoutly clamours for State aid, to be rendered by the simple expedient of exempting new buildings from taxation. Mrs. Wood, on the other hand, pugnaciously battles for State credit, for loans at low interest, and although she ranks high as a statistician on the subject, she has the hardihood to cite European experience with State credits in support of her argument, notwithstanding the fact that at the present moment State credit is nowhere producing houses except under the additional stimulus of cash subsidies. It is becoming increasingly clear that State credit never has done and never can do more than temporarily alleviate our plight until all credit and all land are controlled in the common interest. What few gains are made in these directions by piecemeal nibblings will quickly be lost in the process of collecting the economic rent through other channels.

But the three-sided argument in this book really divides along another line—the line of immediate action. Something must be done, say Mrs. Wood and Mr. Murphy, but nothing can be done, says Mr. Ackerman, until we are ready to adopt a new method for production and free the outlets of industry and commerce so that the toll now taken in economic rent through land- and credit-monopoly shall no longer devour an ever-increasing share of the benefits that flow—that ought to flow but do not—from our perfected productive processes.

Unfortunately very few people see the relation of the housing-problem to such things as the recent dumping of twenty-four hundred tons of sand at sea because the New York Sand Trust would not allow it to enter the

¹ "The Housing Famine." John J. Murphy, Edith Elmer Wood and Frederick L. Ackerman. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

New York market, or to the burning of vast quantities of cotton in order to keep the price up, or to begging the Government Treasury for rural credits in order to store wheat until the price can be sent up, or to the closing down of cotton-mills so as to "improve the state of the market," or to the bankers' demand of a bonus for a building-loan, or to any one of the hundred similar practices by which the now fabulous economic rent is taken. Of what use are State credits, exemptions from taxation, or even subsidies, under such conditions as these? Raised by taxation, they are at once added to the general burden of taxation and deftly shifted to the shoulders of the very humans for whose benefit they were invoked. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the Interborough System in New York quite baldly announces in its propaganda for higher fares, that higher taxes mean higher rents. One is tempted to ask, when did higher taxes, or when will they, ever mean anything else than higher rents under present methods?

It takes courage to confess oneself as hopeless as Mr. Ackerman does in this book, but it is the sort of courage that must be generated in the United States if ever we are to see our way out of the present financial morass—for the housing-problem is only a part of the whole problem. The sub-title of "The Housing Famine" is "How to End It," but it is only Mr. Ackerman who has blazed a trail through the economic jungle in which we are now lost.

CHARLES HARRIS WHITAKER.

SHORTER NOTICES.

M. ISWOLSKY, in his "Recollections of a Foreign Minister,"¹ reveals himself as a typical Russian diplomat of the old school. True, he asserts that he was considered a dangerous liberal in Court circles; but the quality of his liberalism may be gauged by the fact that he professes unbounded admiration for Stolypin, the organizer and chief director of the period of bloody reaction which followed the unsuccessful revolution of 1905. The author is sometimes more than a little naïve, as when he complacently observes that he, with Stolypin, formed the "left wing" of a certain Cabinet, or when he says of Tsar Nicholas, who ordered the massacre of Bloody Sunday and openly encouraged the pogroms carried out by the Black Hundreds: "I am able to qualify as absolutely false the accusations that have been made against him as being strangely insensible to the sufferings of others." M. Iswolsky attempts to defend the reputation of Nicholas in connexion with the secret Treaty of Bjorkoe, an agreement forced upon the Tsar by the Kaiser in 1905, providing for an offensive and defensive alliance between Russia and Germany, based upon the assumption that France would eventually enter the League. The author insists that the Tsar had no intention of betraying France when he signed this ill-considered agreement. For the rest, M. Iswolsky's book is a miscellany of reminiscences, personal and historical, and chiefly interesting because they depict a political and social organization in Russia which has now happily passed away for ever. W. H. C.

THE spiritual pilgrimage of Charles Hargrove² begins with a parental conflict more terrible than Samuel Butler depicted in "The Way of All Flesh." It is almost impossible at this date to imagine the spiritual complexion of an age in which a thirteen-year-old child can write to his "darling Pa": "I am not happy, never was truly happy, and I want to be happy, I want to know Christ as my Saviour." Even the evangelicism of the backwoods to-day is, one fancies, a little kinder to its youngsters than the little sect of Plymouth Brethren whose interpretation of the Bible made young Charles Hargrove's life such a picturesque horror. From the authority of his benignly sadistic parents Mr. Hargrove escaped to Roman Catholicism, by way of the Dominican order, and spent ten years in a faith to which, even at the end of his life, he looked back with a kindly eye, as to a dream which was real as long as the sleeper slept. Doubt entered; Mr. Hargrove left the Church; and after a period in the wilderness built himself a tabernacle to the Unknown God on the tranquil heights of Unitarianism. Mr. Hargrove was not a remarkable man, but he left materials for a remarkable biography. It is a pity

that Mr. Jacks in his chronicle "From Authority to Freedom"³ did not make better use of them. We have learned enough about psychology since the time of William James's great excursions to justify a somewhat different treatment of this spiritual history. It is perhaps a legitimate criticism of Mr. Jacks's work to say that his essay might have been written twenty years ago. L. C. M.

THE spectacle of so many of the younger American poets deliberately adjusting themselves to the measures of free verse is abruptly broken by Mr. Stephen Vincent Benét. For Mr. Benét, who might almost be classified as the youngest child in the American school, although he has three books to his credit, clings defiantly (nay, pugnaciously) to time-honoured rhythms and rhymes. "Heavens and Earth,"⁴ which is not nearly so flippant a book as its title suggests, puts us in confusion by starting off with a long poem about Helen of Troy. One must presume that young Mr. Benét intends to startle us by being radically conservative. The matter in this new volume is marked by a freshness of mood, a generous splashing of vivid colours, a resonant rhythmical quality so consistently maintaining the authentic plane of poetry as to give new life to the most hackneyed themes. When Mr. Benét says:

The centaurs awoke! they aroused from their beds of pine,
Their long flanks hoary with dew, and their eyes, deep-drowned
In the primal slumber of stones, stirred bright to the shine!
And they stamped with their hooves and their gallop abased the ground!

we are struck by certain old echoes (can it be Mr. Yeats's "Oisín" of beloved memory?) but they are lost in the vigour of Mr. Benét's bold, clear voice. Some of the New York poems are vivid in their imagery. There is "Lunch-Time along Broadway," for instance, in which "the octopus-crowd comes rolling out, his tentacles crawl for meat." If one were to search for the real Stephen Vincent Benét it is a fair guess that he would be found in these flashing contemporary pictures. The healthy cynicism of Rupert Brooke, which was no more than the divine insolence and impatience of youth, is to be found time and again in Mr. Benét's work.

H. S. G.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

As I have been running through Henry Wickford's letters these last weeks fragments of his talk have drifted back into my mind. Wickford was never at his best in talk; he was a reflective rather than a spontaneous man, and he liked to turn over his impressions in his mind and get them right, as he expressed it, before he committed himself. The truth is, I suppose, that, much as he would have enjoyed it, he had never been able to discover or to adjust himself to any circle in society where good conversation prevailed; and as a result of this his mind remained a little slow, and even rustic. But in default of such an opportunity, and the habit which it enables one to form of getting one's thought "right the very first time" (to quote the ancient song), he preferred not to be considered as a talker at all: a circumstance that now and then caused a momentary embarrassment at the table d'hôte where we met and where, old frequenter that he was, he always refused to take the head of the table. It was his respect for the art of conversation that prompted this excess of scruple, no doubt: he had his own art, unpretentious as it was, the art of thinking twice over his journal and his letters, and this gave him a sort of criterion. In recording even a few of his remarks, therefore, the few that I remember, I feel that I am perhaps committing an indiscretion. That is what Wickford said, I remind myself; but would he have written it so?

Would he have written, for instance, the following phrase?—"Earnest people are people who habitually look at the serious side of things that have no serious side." On reflection he would perhaps have felt that earnestness is a much more formidable quality than this implies. Again: "There are two possible points of view. One ends in trust, the other in dust. Rhyme it either way you please." There was an occasion for this remark: still, I am sure that if he had seen it in print he would

¹"Heavens and Earth." Stephen Vincent Benét. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

¹"Recollections of a Foreign Minister." Memoirs of Alexander Iswolsky. Translated by Charles Louis Seeger. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company.

²"From Authority to Freedom: The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Charles Hargrove." L. P. Jacks. London: Williams & Norgate.

have considered it a little too magniloquent for modern lips. There was even perhaps a tinge of the consequential in his reply when some one quoted the famous phrase, *Moi, je trouve la terre aussi belle que la ciel*: "Yes, dear Gautier, but why drag in heaven?" Wickford, as I say, had to think twice. Was it because, having a touch of the actor in his make-up, he was a little afraid that he might be led into talking for effect? At any rate, I remember his remarking that R. L. Stevenson always wrote "as though he were talking to a woman who admired him," adding (as if to imply that Stevenson had more bravado than capacity): "It is said to be courageous to be frank about oneself. On the contrary, it requires talent of a high order." But as I write these observations down it occurs to me how little they suggest Wickford's real character. He was anything but epigrammatic; and while I remember many of his conversations, his actual words, for the most part, have passed entirely out of my mind. Let me recall two occasions when he spoke in quite a different vein. One evening, after the other guests had gone, he fell, as he often did, into a sort of reverie. At last, as if in reply to a question, he told me that he was thinking of an old woman, bent and anxious, whom he had seen years before copying in the Louvre. "And what do you think she was copying?" he said. "*Les Illusions Perdues*." On the other occasion his expression was only less dejected. I came in late and finding him alone, and apparently in low spirits, I asked him if anything had gone wrong. "Oh, no," he replied. "Young H— has just been here telling me his enthusiasms. I felt like Pater's *Monna Lisa*—older than the rocks among which she sits—when he told me what a poet ought to be."

WICKFORD's talk, like his letters, often dealt with American literature. One of the subjects to which he recurred now and then was the remarkable longevity, among a people who had no use for leisure, of the tradition of Charles Lamb. "Could anything be stranger," I have heard him say, "than the vogue of these essays on walking, talking, and all the other irrelevancies for which, in real life, our countrymen have such a profound disdain? There is only one explanation of it. It was Lamb's mission to make leisure appear delightful. The mission of his American followers is to make it appear contemptible: that is one way of serving Mammon." He was convinced that they succeeded in their effort, though I tried to persuade him that he was quite unjust; he went even further, indeed, and, mentioning two or three highly respected essayists, insisted that they were wolves in Lamb's clothing who, under a pretence of geniality and liberality, followed the usual tactics of the pack, crying up war, inflaming prejudice, condemning everything that was new, hopeful, vital and of the future. But Wickford looked askance and strangely upon most of the phenomena of his own generation, with which, on the whole, he had a singular want of sympathy. Their patriotic idea for American literature, he would say, is to defend American life as it is from every attack from within and every influence from without. "Such complacency," he added once, "was unknown among men of letters at the most complacent moment in Victorian England. Macaulay thought there was nothing amiss with his own country; yes, and he was the butt of every other writer of his generation."

WICKFORD, however, as I have said, was not at his best in conversation. He preferred his second thoughts; and often after one of our discussions he would write to me, enlarging upon some point which he felt he had not made sufficiently clear. A surprising number of his letters, I find, are postscripts of this sort, two or three of which I should like to quote here—the following note, for example, on Mr. Dreiser:

What makes Dreiser effective as a force of civilization is not that he himself opens the door into any possible future. His mind is altogether retrospective, and the enveloping darkness of his mood already seems a little archaic. But he has, I should say, forced the issue upon which the fate of our

civilization depends. In what way? By revealing in all its hideousness and futility the real nature of a social life that offers no play to the creative impulses. At his touch, as at the touch of a deadly acid, the complex background of American society assumes the most sinister colouring, so that to read Dreiser is to be purged of any lingering tendency to play a willing, conventional part in the existing order. In short, by unfolding the commercial tradition in its complete context of cause and effect, he has at once marked out the rôle of the creative life and broken the spell of everything that opposes it. Dreiser is accused of being in league with nature, the nature that is red in tooth and claw. In reality, the life of the spirit is his constant concern and there is nothing but aspiration in his books. What becomes of that aspiration is another matter! The burden of his work is the fatal concentration of all impulses, under conditions like ours, upon the primitive ends of self-preservation and sex. If he seems to worship force, it is only because he is on the side of life in circumstances that have prevented force from distributing itself. He throws into relief the drab, devastated American scene, with its broken talents and gutted passions and bankrupt religions, its half-conscious victims, its unconscious victors, its waste and litter and confusion. There, he seems to say, is what results when desire has no imaginative outlets: finding no channels in society to receive it and diffuse it, it is driven to tear its way out—leaving nothing but ruin behind. But do not for this reason, I conceive him as adding, make the mistake of condemning energy itself which, terrible as it is, is also beautiful and the source of all virtue! America has simply turned against itself the principle of its own growth. . . . Do you ask, then, why, in spite of many reservations, I admire this novelist? It is because he has created an irresistible occasion for the writers that follow him. Thanks to Dreiser we can see that an American literature *has to exist*. Many a greater artist has achieved less than this.

PASSING to quite a different field I find these reflections on Ireland, a theme in which Wickford had an unfailing interest. On the preceding evening, as I remember, a certain Irish poet had been among the guests:

What is the secret of the appeal which the Irish literary movement has had for us? Thomas MacDonagh maintained that in Ireland our common language had kept the natural purity and freshness it had lost in England in the hurly-burly of industrialism; and the same thing may be said of our heritage of thought. Along the great, noisy thoroughfares of the intellectual world the most sensitive spirits too easily lose their savour, forget the ends of life in the means and become professionalized. What shipwreck has befallen the ruling English talents of the years before the war! Never have men so utterly laid waste their powers. Irish thought, on the other hand, has the air of looking out, with a sort of incorruptible innocence, a virginal candour, upon a world where all things are still possible.

You remember how Carlyle reproached Emerson for that irrelevant Platonism of his. It is not the dutiful spirits alone who are annoyed to-day in a similar fashion by what they consider the remoteness of Irish thought: Æ., John Eglinton, Terence MacSwiney ("Principles of Freedom"). For these "soliloquizers on the mountain-tops" our mundane intellectuals, with their load of scientific learning, have nothing but disdain. It is true enough that without scientific learning the so-called great nations will never be able to bring order out of their chaos and that civilization everywhere depends on it. But civilization depends still more upon a capacity to master life, a capacity for "heroic action," in short; and that is what Ireland, at the present time, has in abundance. MacSwiney's death was an illustration of it. Æ.'s life is another: these are free men, men who are not studying a society but creating one. And their life and writings are all of a piece. *Democracy in economics, aristocracy in thought*—how right that conception of Æ.'s is! The one hangs on the other. For an aristocratic thought liberates the individual from any but a disinterested attitude toward material things, and makes him a master as well: it is a fund of spiritual power. What our pragmatic intellectuals call the "irrelevant Platonism" of its thinkers has contributed more than anything else perhaps to make Ireland, in a time of lassitude and reaction, and in spite of all its internal and external handicaps, the vital centre of the English-speaking world.

But this was another of Wickford's hobbies: I have heard him say that there was more of the Homeric in the spirit of the Irish Republicans than in all the "strong silent men" of the modern Empires.

THE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"The Evolution of Revolution," by H. M. Hyndman. New York: Boni and Liveright.

"The Memoirs of Count Witte," translated by Abraham Yarmolinsky. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Page & Company.

The Follies of 1921

EVERY age has its own orthodoxies and as times change new methods of attack are demanded. When bustles and wasp-like waists were in style Bob Ingersoll was puncturing the mistakes of Moses. The net result of his eloquence *may* have been a decrease in superstition, but who would assert that his method is appropriate to the follies of 1921?

Since Ingersoll's day certain orthodoxies other than religious have waxed big: in our time large numbers believe in the Divine right of private ownership in land on the one hand and some, equally devout, kneel at the shrine of collective ownership on the other. Many kinds of incense are being burned: for instance, the altar of jingoism, covered with the stolen decorations of patriotism, is well patronized, and politics and economics of every denomination have their Churches.

To all of these the higher criticism of inquiry and investigation is heresy but, as the battering-ram gave way to the machine-gun, oratory has been succeeded by exposés of facts, calm reasoning, patient endurance, (after all, everything is sure to change if you're willing to wait!), and a generous amount of good natured ridicule. In so far as the FREEMAN devotes itself to criticism of institutionalized bigotry it employs such modern methods, particularly the method of making people think for themselves.

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